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Received
May 1875.

THE
CHRISTIAN CORRESPONDENT:
LETTERS,
PRIVATE AND CONFIDENTIAL,
BY
EMINENT PERSONS OF BOTH SEXES;
EXEMPLIFYING THE
FRUITS OF HOLY LIVING, AND THE BLESSEDNESS
OF HOLY DYING.

WITH A PRELIMINARY ESSAY BY
JAMES MONTGOMERY, ESQ.

"His letters," say they, "are weighty and powerful.—Such as we are in word, by letters when we are absent, such will we be also in deed when we are present."—2 Cor. x. 10, 11.

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PART III.

CONGRATULATORY LETTERS.

PART III.

CONGRATULATORY LETTERS.

LETTER CLXIII.

Jeremy Taylor to his brother-in-law, **Mr. Langsdale**, Gainsborough, congratulating him on his recovery.

Dear Brother, Nov. 24, 1643.

Thy letter was most welcome to me, bringing the happy news of thy recovery. . . . . I hope I shall not need to bid thee be careful for the perfecting thy health, and to be fearful of a relapse. Though *I* am very much, yet *thou thyself* art more concerned in it; but this I will remind thee of, that thou be infinitely careful to perform to God those holy promises which I suppose thou didst make in thy sickness: and remember what thoughts thou hadst then, and bear them along upon thy spirit all thy life time. For that which was true then, is so still, and the world is really as vain a thing as thou didst then suppose it. I durst not tell thy mother of thy danger, (though I heard of it,) till at the same time I told her of thy recovery. Poor woman, she was troubled and pleased at the same time. . . . .

Thy most affectionate and dear brother,

Jeremy Taylor.

John Howe to Sir Charles and Lady Hoghton, of Hoghton Tower, on their marriage: written on the same sheet of paper.

LETTER CLXIV.

To Sir Charles.

Most honoured Sir,

I thankfully acknowledge the favour of your welcome lines, which ought to be most entirely so, both upon the account of the author, and the matter of them. For though my opportunity for so desirable an acquaintance hath been but little as to the circumstance, it hath been much as to the substance of what I know of you, in ways that gave me greatest assurance, before I had the happiness of oral converse with you. Nor could any thing be more grateful to me, than to read you from your own hand so related, and so well pleased (as I doubt not you will be daily more and more) with your relation, and the other accessory correlates, with whom God hath cast your lot.

I believe you have much reason to bless God, (who orders all things to the best advantage to such as sincerely give themselves up to his conduct,) that he led you not into such a condition and state of life as he now at length hath brought you into, before you were well acquainted with the rules and duties of it, better than to need help from such a one as I. But among the many other precepts that concern that case, I dare adventure to recommend those of 1 Cor. vii. 29, 30, 31. And pursuantly thereto, to offer to your thoughts, that this can be but a partial temporary felicity, and so far only so at all, as it is enjoyed only as mediate, and subservient to the full and final felicity which we are professedly seeking and waiting for: so far ought it to be, to oppose it, or let it be an obstruction thereto. Which is the nature of all good things that have only the goodness of the means, and not of the end, that their goodness is variable, and by misapplication may degenerate into an hurtful evil. Within the compass of such things is the truth of those words to be confined; *nil prodest, quod non lædere possit idem.* It is beyond the measure of any created good to be universally so. That, therefore, which in its own place is a real good, applied to the particular purpose which it is capable of serving, out of that place, and being trusted, valued, and delighted in, beyond the measure which God and the nature of the thing have stated and set, may become an hurt to us.

But there can be no greater or more endearing obligation to use any mercy for God, than an habitual fixed sense of its having been received from him, and a deeply radicated and often repeated agnition of his sovereign hand in ordering it to be our lot, with all the circumstances that have had any reference thereto. For what ingenuous heart can endure to oppose to him, or employ against him, the (apprehended) fruit of his own favour and kindness? a pledge of his paternal love and care so understood! And, therefore, the greater the gift is, (still considered under that strict notion,) the stronger is the inducement to honour and serve the giver with it, and to enjoy, according to his prescription, what we enjoy not but by his vouchsafement.

If to all this I should add a request to you to be exceeding kind to my most dear and honoured friend, it were the greatest impertinence in all the world. For she, having such a temper to work upon, will make you so whether you will or no. And I might as well use arguments to persuade a fragrant flower to send forth its grateful odours, when a most benign orient sun is plying it with its cherishing morning beams. Such may you long be, both of you mutually (sun and flower) to each other, shining and flourishing with all the influence and under the continual blessing of heaven. So shall you communicate a part of that joy, which I most entirely wish you, to,

Sir,
Your very faithful, affectionate, humble servant,
J. Howe.

LETTER CLXV.

To Lady Hoghton.

Whatsoever leisure (most dear and honoured madam) you may suppose me to have, I had little reason to suppose Sir Charles and yourself to have much, from the reading of one another, to cast your eyes upon any thing I could write. But if after this paper shall have lain one quarter of a year somewhere near your dressing-box, you find it not unseasonable to bestow a glance upon it, you will then at length find your disappointment. For it will tell you nothing but what you well knew, or might easily guess before; that having a constant, most affectionate respect and honour for you, *I* cannot but be highly pleased that *you* are so.

And methinks it should not much surprise you, if I further say, I would have you somewhat to alter (or make your exception to) your own rule, and not show the less kindness to Sir Charles for that he is a married man. This will not be strange to you, if you remember some of your last winter lines.

After this hath made you smile a little, as that of yours did me, then think that this novelty in your condition will neither make nor allow you to smile always, though I hope it will add a great deal to the comfort and pleasantness of your days. And you may sometime have occasion to think seriously together, of the sense of those words, Luke xiv. 26. And always remember the subordination that all creature-love must be in, to that of the supreme object of our love. How pleasant a thing will it be to have hearts united and consenting in the resolution of loving him perpetually above all, to whom we owe our all, and who is altogether lovely! to consult and conspire together, how most to promote his interest, and improve in acquaintance with him, and conformity to him. This I believe your heart to be much formed to beforehand. The great care must be, that such resolutions do not gradually languish. We find many are apt by unobserved degrees to starve the good affections and inclinations, which they would abhor to assassinate by a sudden violence. I write securely, that such an intimation will, by so great a kindness as yours, be very well taken from

Your ladyship's
Most affectionate humble servant,
J. HOWE.

LETTER CLXVI.

BISHOP BURNET to **LADY RUSSELL**, on the marriage of one of her children.

Salisbury, Oct. 31, 1636.

I do heartily congratulate with your ladyship for this new blessing. God has now heard your prayers, with relation to two of your children, which is a good earnest that he will hear them in due time with relation to the third. You begin to see your children's children; God grant you may likewise see peace upon Israel. And now that God has so built up your house, I hope you will set yourself to build a house of prayer for the honour of his name.

You have passed through very different scenes of life. God has reserved the best to the last. I do make it a standing part of my poor prayers twice a day, that as now your family is the greatest in its three branches that has been in England in our age, so that it may in every one of these answer those blessings by an exemplary holiness, and that both you and they may be public blessings to the age and nation.

I do not think of coming up yet this fortnight, if I am not called for. I humbly thank your ladyship for giving me this early notice of so great blessing to you. I hope it shall soon be completed by my lady Ross's full recovery. Mrs. Burnet is very sensible of the honour your ladyship does her in thinking of her, and does particularly rejoice in God's goodness to you. I am, with the highest sense of gratitude and respect possible,

Madam, yours, &c.

GILBERT SARUM.

LETTER CLXVII.

REV. AUGUSTUS TOPLADY to a FRIEND, on his marriage; with a postscript more amusing than appropriate on such an occasion.

Broad Hembury, Dec. 29, 1774.

No congratulations wait on my ever dear friend, from Broad Hembury, on account of his new connexion. The reason is, because no change of state, on his part can make me love and wish him better than I did before. Nor do I transmit you those compliments, which usually reverberate from friend to friend, at this particular season of the year; because you have my very best wishes, without intermission, all the year round. And so, I doubt not, will the new partner of your heart, when I have the honour and the pleasure of knowing her. In the meanwhile, I request you to inform her, that she has my respectful salutations.

I take the liberty to trouble you with the inclosed packet, for Mr. M——. It contains only the sermon on Psalm cxv. 1, which owes its transmission to the press entirely to your condescending desire, signified when I was last in London. You see I am not all disobedience to your commands; though I must, for once, run counter to some of them: I mean, so far as concerns the principal subject of your last kind and obliging letter. Some nephritic complaints, to which I have long perceived myself liable, warn me to ply my pen no more than necessity may require.

I am, with great affection and respect,

AUGUSTUS TOPLADY.

P.S. I lost poor Mr. Lane, about a fortnight ago; who, at the age of seventy-six, preserved all the strength and gaiety of a boy at sixteen, until within a few days of his decease. He was the second of my domestics whom God has removed by death, in the compass of two months. Mrs. Lane (who, by the way, continues as lively at seventy-seven, as she could be at thirty) still keeps my house; and supports the loss of her husband, not only philosophically, but heroically. An estate, however, of twenty-five pounds per annum, which died with him, is, I believe, very sincerely, though not inconsolably, regretted. Mr. Lane had not been dead a quarter of an hour, when his relict addressed me thus: "Sir, I have been thinking, that it will be to no purpose to lay out money for a fine shroud, to be hid in a coffin; nor a fine coffin to be hid in the earth." This was natural philosophy, literally so called. It is really a happiness, on irremediable occasions, to have little or no feeling. I envy insensible people, because they are ignorant of mental pain, the keenest species of any. Adieu.

LETTER CLXVIII.

Rev. John Newton to Mrs. H—— and another Friend.
A letter of congratulation and advice after their marriage.

Madam, Sept. 21, 1770.

As the engagements you lately have entered into have not separated you from each other, I can, as formerly, write to you both at once. I should be glad to hear, that the third in our correspondence was as comfortably settled in H—— likewise. However, I beg you will mention my love to her when opportunity offers, and tell her, that I hope to be always mindful of her. Your being both removed from Y—— must doubtless be a great trial to her; but I trust she will find an all-sufficient God always near to make good every change and every loss.

I congratulate Mrs. C—— on her marriage, and Mrs. H—— on the Lord's goodness in preserving her life, and giving her a living child; for the rest I may speak to you without distinction. The grace of God enabled you both to walk honourably in single life; I trust the same grace will enable you to adorn your profession in the married state. I need not tell you, that both the sphere of your comforts and your trials is now enlarged. Your opportunities for usefulness will be increased; so likewise will the snares and temptations in the path of duty. I take it for granted that you are very happy, that you are united to your husbands, not only by marriage, but by mutual affection, and, what is better still, by mutual faith; and that, as you sought the Lord's direction before the connexion was formed, so you came together evidently by his blessing. What then shall I say to you? Only, or chiefly this.—Beware of being too happy—beware of idolatry. Husbands, children, possessions, every thing by which the Lord is pleased to afford us content or pleasure, are full of snares. How hard is it to love a creature just as we ought; and so to possess our temporal blessings as neither to overvalue nor undervalue them! How rare is it to see a believer go on steadily, and in a lively, thriving spirit, if remarkably favoured with prosperous circumstances! It is hard, but it is not impossible: impossible, indeed, it is to us; but it is easy to Him who has said, "My grace is sufficient for you." My desire is, that you may be both witnesses of the Lord's faithfulness to this his good promise. I wish you health, peace, and prosperity; but above all, that your souls may prosper; that you may still prefer the light of God's countenance to your chief joy; that you may still delight yourselves in the Lord; be daily hungering and thirsting after him, and daily receiving from his fulness, even grace for grace; that you may rejoice in his all-sufficiency, may taste his love in every dispensation; that every blessing of his common providence may come to you as a fruit and token of his covenant love; that the frame of your spirits may be heavenward, your conduct exemplary, and your whole conversation may breathe the meekness, simplicity, and spirituality which become the Gospel of Christ. I have strong confidence in the Lord for you, my dear friends, that it shall be even thus.—And it will rejoice my heart to hear that it is so.

However, the Lord may be pleased to indulge us with comforts and mercies here, still this is not,—cannot be, our rest. Indwelling sin, the temptations of Satan, changing dispensations, and the vanity which is inseparably entwined with every earthly connexion, will more or less disturb our peace. But there is a brighter world, where sin and sorrow can never enter; every moment brings us nearer to it:—then every imperfection shall cease, and our best desires shall be satisfied beyond our present conceptions:—then we shall see him whom having not seen we love: we shall see him in all his glory, not as now, through the medium of ordinances, but face to face, without a veil, we shall see him so as to be completely transformed into his perfect image. Then, likewise, we shall see all his redeemed, and join with an innumerable multitude of all nations, people, and languages, in singing the triumphant song of Moses and the Lamb for ever! Then, we shall look back with wonder on all the way the Lord led us through this wilderness, and shall say, "He hath done all things well." May this blessed hope comfort our hearts, strengthen our hands, and make us account nothing dear or hard, so that we may finish our course with joy. Pray for us; and believe me to be

Your affectionate friend and servant.

LETTER CLXIX.

REV. JOHN NEWTON to MR. W——, upon his recovery from a severe attack of illness.—Why the Christian should chiefly covet life.

MY DEAR SIR, July 8, 1769.

I have been thinking upon you and yours upon my knees, and would be thankful for the information I had yesterday from Mr. ——, that the Lord is raising you up again. Indeed, I have heard that, in your illness, you were favoured with such sweet foretastes of the glory that shall be revealed, that death appeared to you not only disarmed of its sting, but a very desirable messenger; and that you had strong hopes that the hour of your release was at hand. In such a frame it is no wonder that you longed to depart and be with Christ; yet as many will have cause to rejoice at your recovery, I hope you, likewise, are made sweetly reconciled to life, and willing to wait and suffer yet a little longer, if by any means the Lord shall be pleased to honour you with usefulness in your station. If we look to ourselves only, and consider our immediate interest, who that has a good hope through grace would not wish to be out of this wilderness, and at home in our Father's house, where all temptations and enemies shall be shut out, and we shall enjoy the unclouded light of his countenance for ever, without the least abatement or interruption. But St. Paul, though he had been taken up into the third heaven, and knew more of the state of glorified spirits than was perhaps ever vouchsafed to a child of Adam; and though, from the tastes he had received, he had very strong desires to be at the fountain-head, yet was content to defer the full possession of his happiness a little longer, if in the meantime the Lord would be pleased to make him serviceable to his church and people. At the longest, the time is short; ten, or twenty, or fifty years is but a span in comparison to the eternity that awaits us. And though we should weep all the while, yet our tears would ere long be wiped away. If we consider this life chiefly with respect to the things which make up a great part of it, as eating, drinking, buying, selling, putting on our clothes, and putting them off, a spiritual mind may well be weary of such a train of necessary trifling. But, besides that even the common actions of life are sanctified, and become a part of our acceptable service, when performed in a spirit of faith, love, and dependence; this love, poor as it is in itself, will become exceedingly important in one view. It is the only opportunity we have to hold forth the power of Gospel truth in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, to show our readiness to bear the cross, and to tread in the steps of a suffering Saviour, and to be subservient to the promoting his cause, and the encouragement of his people. Many of our years were wasted in the service of sin before we knew the Lord; and though they are happy who are taken out of this vain world soon after their conversion, yet I think they are more honoured who are preserved to bear a testimony to his goodness, and to be useful in their generation for a course of years. Therefore, though, if the Lord had seen fit to remove you, you would have escaped some trials which in this world you will be sure to meet with, and would have had your hungerings after Jesus abundantly satisfied; yet, upon the account of dear Mrs. ——, your children, your place in the church and in the world, as well as upon my own account, I cannot but rejoice that there is a prospect of your continuance longer on this side the grave.

When I look at the state of the land, I know not how to spare one praying person. They are the chariots and the horsemen of our Israel; and I hope you will live to be an earnest and prevalent pleader in behalf of a sinful people.

It is a happy and most desirable frame to be ready and willing either to live or die, and to be enabled so absolutely to give ourselves up to the Lord's disposal as to have no choice of our own either way, but only intent upon improving to-day and cheerfully to leave to-morrow and all beyond it in his hands who does all things well.

I am, dear Sir,
Your affectionate and obliged servant,

LETTER CLXX.

William Cowper, Esq. to Joseph Hill, Esq.—On his recovery from sickness.

Dear Joe, Olney, Jan. 21, 1796.

I rejoice with you in your recovery, and that you have escaped from the hands of one from whose hands you will not always escape. Death is either the most formidable, or the most comfortable thing we have in prospect on this side of eternity. To be brought near to him, and to discern neither of these features in his face, would argue a degree of insensibility, of which I will not suspect my friend, whom I know to be a thinking man. You have been brought down to the side of the grave, and you have been raised again by Him who has the keys of the invisible world; who opens and none can shut, who shuts and none can open. I do not forget to return thanks to him on your behalf, and to pray that your life, which he has spared, may be devoted to his service. "Behold! I stand at the door and knock," is the word of Him, on whom both our mortal and immortal life depend; and, blessed be his name, it is the word of one who wounds only that he may heal, and who waits to be gracious. The language of every such dispensation is, "Prepare to meet thy God." It speaks with the voice of mercy and goodness, for, without such notices, whatever preparation we might make for other events, we should make none for this. My dear friend, I desire and pray that, when this last enemy shall come to execute an *unlimited* commission upon us, we may be found ready, being established and rooted in a well-grounded faith in his name, who conquered and triumphed over him upon his cross.

Yours ever,
W. C.

LETTER CLXXI.

WILLIAM COWPER, ESQ. to JOSEPH HILL, ESQ.—On his marriage.

DEAR JOE, Olney, August 27, 1771.

I take a friend's share in all your concerns, so far as they come to my knowledge, and consequently did not receive the news of your marriage with indifference. I wish you and your bride all the happiness that belongs to the state; and the still greater felicity of that state which marriage is only a type of. All these connexions shall be dissolved; but there is an indissoluble bond between Christ and his church, the subject of derision to an unthinking world, but the glory and happiness of all his people.

I join with your brother and sisters in their joy upon the present occasion, and beg my affectionate respects to them and to Mrs. Hill unknown.

Yours, ever,

W. C.

LETTER CLXXII.

Bishop Heber to John Thornton, Esq., after his marriage.

All your letters give me pleasure; but none so much as those in which you describe your own happiness. I trust that it will be now increasing daily, and that your affection will continue as lasting as I believe it to be pure and rational. I trust, too, that amid your feelings of happiness, feelings of gratitude will always keep a place, united with a sense of your total dependence on the hand which has given so largely to you, and which may even now, in a moment, deprive you of all you value most. The season of great prosperity is very seldom favourable to serious impressions; it were fortunate for us, if it were possible, when we are most sensible of the value of a beloved object, to recollect the probability of that very blessing being immediately taken away. The more pain the idea gives, the more reason we have to examine and amend our hearts, lest we impose a necessity on divine mercy to take away from his thoughtless children, the blessing they are perverting to their own destruction. You, my friend, have often told me how uniformly happy your life has hitherto been; may it long continue so, and may your heart continue such as not to need any terrible visitation. To you I can thus write without your suspecting me of hypocrisy or a fondness for giving lectures; thoughtless and thankless as I am myself, inattentive as my conduct is to my own welfare, I am not indifferent or careless about yours; and indeed, we often reap advantage ourselves from talking or writing seriously to others.

Nor will this perfect recollection of your dependence, this uniting always to the idea of your most beloved object, the idea of the Giver, at all produce that cold-blooded indifference which Pascal cants about; you will not love the creature less, but you will love the Creator more. Far from such unnatural enthusiasm, the more devotion we feel to God, the warmer, I should think, will be our affections to those with whom we are connected: we shall love them for God's sake as well as for their own. By this one sentiment our warmest feelings become hallowed, and even the blessings of this world may be a source of religious comfort. From the reflection that they are all His gifts, every enjoyment will receive a higher colouring, and the more happy we are, the more earnestly we shall long for an admission to that heaven, where we shall see the Lord which blesses us, and really experience, what we now know but faintly, how pleasant it is to be thankful. There have been moments, I am ashamed to say how seldom, when my heart has burned within me, with the conviction which I have just described. You, I trust, have often known it, and probably in a far higher degree. You now, if ever, *ought* to feel it.

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Yours most truly,
Reginald Heber.

PART IV.

LETTERS OF CONDOLENCE AND CONSOLATION.

PART IV.

LETTERS OF CONDOLENCE AND CONSOLATION.

LETTER CLXXIII.

QUEEN CATHARINE PARR to LADY WRIOTHESLEY, on the loss of her only son.

Good, my lady Wriothesley, understanding it hath pleased God of late to disinherit your son of this world, of intent he should become partner and chosen heir of the everlasting inheritance, (for which calling and happy vocation ye may rejoice,) yet when I consider you are a mother by flesh and nature, doubting how you can give place quietly to the same ;—inasmuch as Christ's mother, endued with all godly virtues, did utter a sorrowful natural passion of her son's death, whereby we have all obtained everlastingly to live ;—therefore amongst other discreet and godly consolations given unto you, as well by my lord your husband, as other your wise friends, I have thought with my own hand to recommend unto you my simple counsel and advice; desiring you not so to utter your natural affection by inordinate sorrow, that God have cause to take you as a murmurer against his appointments and ordinances. For what is excessive sorrow but a plain evidence against you, that your inward mind doth repine against God's doings, and a declaration that you are not contented, that God hath put your son by nature, but his by adoption, in possession of the heavenly kingdom? Such as have doubted of the everlasting life to come, do sorrow and bewail the departure hence; but those which are persuaded that to die here is life again, do rather hunger for death, and count it a felicity, than to bewail it as an utter destruction.

How much, madam, are you to be counted godly-wise, that will and can prevent through your godly wisdom, knowledge, and humble submission, that thing which time would at length finish. If you lament your son's death, you do him great wrong, and show yourself to sorrow for the happiest thing that ever came to him, being in the hands of his best Father. If you are sorry for your own commodity, you show yourself to live to yourself. And as of his towardness you could but only hope, his years were so young, which could perform nothing, it seemeth that he was now a meet and pleasant sacrifice for Christ.

Wherefore good, my lady Wriothesley, put away all immoderate and unjust heaviness, requiring you with thanksgiving to frame your heart, that the Father in heaven may think you are most glad and best contented to make him a present of his spiritual, and your only natural son; glorifying him more in that it hath pleased his Majesty to accept and able (¹) him to his kingdom, than that it first pleased him to comfort you with such a gift; who can at his pleasure recompense your loss with such a like jewel, if gladly and quietly you submit, and refer all to his pleasure.

LETTER CLXXIV.

JOHN PHILPOT, the martyr, to his FRIENDS.—A letter of farewell, shortly before he suffered.

A man that is passing into far countries, before his departure, commits such goods as God has endued him with to his dearest friends, that they might be the better by them, if he return not again. Even so, dearly beloved, and right worshipful, my good friends, I, having shortly to pass unto my heavenly inheritance which is hid with Christ, and to our common country and eternal dwelling-place, which we shall have with God, never to return before the latter day, in which our souls shall come to judgment, and receive their bodies to be glorified, according to their doings; have thought it my duty to communicate something unto you, (with whom I have found great humanity,) something of the few heavenly treasures

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(¹) Fit.

with which God, among others has endued me in Christ, whereby he has made me his child, and assuredly the inheritor of the kingdom of heaven, with all those who unfeignedly love him, and constantly cleave to his holy gospel :—and that is, by the renovation of his image, whereunto man was first created like unto God, (which is, to be in the favour of God, to know God truly, to live justly, to delight fervently in the contemplation of God, to be continually happy, to be immortal, void of all corruption and sin;) which blessed image, through sin, is deformed in us, and in a manner lost, saving that it hath pleased God of his mercy, who willeth not the death of a sinner, to restore that image by grace, through knowledge and belief of the gospel, which otherwise is entirely suppressed and extinguished in our nature.

Therefore, we knowing the great and lamentable loss which we sustain in Adam, ought most earnestly to seek the recovery thereof, that we might eternally live like unto God in immortality and felicity; which we shall never recover, unless we go about to mortify our outward man, all the days of our lives, more and more, and are renewed in spirit, according to the true knowledge of God. Which if we are, then may we be assured that we have found that joy, felicity, and eternal life, which Adam had in Paradise; yea, and more than that, ten thousand fold, for it is such as the eye hath not seen, the ear hath not heard, neither the heart can conceive, which Christ has prepared for us. This image of God, whosoever by faith does find, he has found the most precious treasure that any man can find, for he is even here a citizen of heaven and in possession of eternal life.

Therefore, I commit unto you principally a daily care of the renovation of this image, as the chiefest jewel you can desire in this world. And thereof now I am the more moved to put you in remembrance, because I love you entirely in the Lord, and desire your fellowship, which the iniquity of our time will not permit me to enjoy here. And forasmuch as we have a better life to come than this present is, an eternal society with Christ, which neither the malice of time, nor the distance of place can dissolve or separate, I exhort you now, as one that has obtained mercy of God in the reparation of his image in me, to embrace the care thereof with earnest desire to attain the same; whereby we shall all have a perfect fruition of our love and friendship, which already we have here begun, and with God in heaven shall be, without all doubt, made joyfully perfect.

Let this be a perpetual remembrance of your poor afflicted friend, who daily looks, through fire to enter into that eternal life, where he trusts assuredly to enjoy your fellowship, if the image of God is renewed in you, through the knowledge of Christ, which you have received and do know. Look whose image the coin bears, his it is. Semblably, (1) if your conversation be after the gospel, verily, you are the elect of Christ; but if it is according to the world, his servants you are whom your life doth express.

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(1) In like manner.

We have all in baptism put on Christ, whom if we endeavour to represent, we are, indeed, the sons of God and inheritors with Christ. One good rule St. Paul to the Romans, in the twelfth chapter, appoints for the restoration of this our image of God: "Fashion not yourselves," saith he, "unto this world, but be ye changed in your shape, by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is the will of God, which is good, acceptable, and perfect." God grant that this rule may take place with you, and then, doubtless, our company shall be inseparable with all the saints of God in eternal bliss.

Be you not deceived by the vain possessions and uncertain pleasures of this world, which serve to no other purpose than to blind your eyes, that they might not behold the things which are glorious and permanent for ever. The things which we see are mortal; but the things which we see not, but certainly hope for, are immortal. For "all flesh," as the prophet Isaiah saith, "is but grass, and the glory thereof as the flower of the field." Oh! that you, who have the possessions of this world, would so account them, and not sell your eternal inheritance for a mess of porridge, as Esau did! God open your eyes, that you may see the glory of Christ in the mount, with Peter, John, and James. Then I doubt not you would say with Peter, "Lord, it is good for us to abide here: let us here make our dwelling-places."

We have in this world no firm mansion, but we seek after that which is to come; which if we seek now where it may be found, we shall surely find. If we mortify the image of Adam, which, through sin, reigns in our flesh, then shall the image of Christ revive in us to our eternal glory. We are all baptized to die with Christ, to the end we should all walk in newness of life, as persons dead to the world, and living to God. And if we die with him by crucifying our concupiscence and lusts we shall eternally live. Infidelity is the cause of all our misery; which causes us to fear man more than God, and to esteem the things present more than the things to come. God enlighten our eyes, that we may understand how precious an inheritance Christ has prepared for such as hunger and thirst thereafter. Then I doubt not we would say with St. Paul, "I am surely persuaded that neither death nor life, neither angels nor rule, neither power, neither things present, neither things to come, neither any other treasure or creature, shall separate us from the love which is in Christ Jesus."

The Lord increase our faith, and give us his Holy Spirit to discern with ourselves how much we are grown in his image and are like unto him; for how much we are unlike to the world, so much more are we like unto God, and so much the more do we approach unto him. The Lord draw you by his Holy Spirit, and fashion you unto his likeness, that we may eternally live together. The means to come thereunto, is diligent exercise in

God's word; continual and faithful prayer; a desire and love to God; the fear of God; the contempt of the world; and a constant faith in the knowledge of his word, joined with the works of righteousness.

This is the sum of all our Christian religion which we do profess, which, if we follow, happy are we that ever we were born. But if we are negligent in this, it had been better for us never to have been born: for cursed are they that decline from the Lord and his holy commandments, and have their delights in the vanities of this world. Cease not to follow the image of God, and to express the same in yourselves to the glory of God, and then God will glorify you for his image sake, which he makes to live in you. We are all weak in transforming the same in us at the beginning, for our flesh is quite contrary to it.

But we must not give over by lawful striving till we say with St. Paul, "Now live I, but not I, but Christ in me." The Lord grant that Christ, who by the gospel is planted in us, may be fashioned in our godly conversation, to the glory of God, and to the good example of our brethren, that our temporal life may be changed into eternal life, and our friendship in God, eternally endure.

This last farewell I send unto you to be a token of my love, until we shall meet in the kingdom of Christ, there to rejoice perfectly of that godly fellowship which here we have had on earth. God hasten that meeting, and deliver you from the temptation which is now come upon the Church of England, for the trial of such as are faithful in the Lord's testament, to the crown of their glory, if they are found faithful to the end.

Let us watch and pray one for another, that these evil days do not overwhelm us, in which our adversary, the devil, goeth about like a roaring lion seeking whom he may devour. The peace of God remain with you for ever.

Written in the King's Bench by one of the poor captive sheep of Christ, appointed to the slaughter for the testimony of the truth, where he doth joy, and wishes you to joy, praising God with him.

JOHN PHILPOT.

LETTER CLXXV.

GEORGE HERBERT to his **MOTHER**, in her sickness.

Trinity College, May 25, 1622.

At my last parting from you I was the better content, because I was in hope I should myself carry all sickness out of your family; but, since I know I did not, and that your share continues, or rather increaseth, I wish earnestly that I were again with you; and would quickly make good my wish, but that my employment does fix me here, it being now but a month to our *commencement:* wherein my absence, by how much it naturally augmenteth suspicion, by so much shall it make my prayers the more constant, and the more earnest for you to the God of all consolation. In the meantime I beseech you to be cheerful, and comfort yourself in the God of all comfort, who is not willing to behold any sorrow but for sin. What hath affliction grievous in it more than for a moment? or why should our afflictions here have so much power or boldness as to oppose the hopes from joys hereafter? Madam, as the earth is but a point in respect of the heavens, so are earthly troubles compared to heavenly joys. Therefore, if either age or sickness lead you to those joys, consider what advantage you have over *youth* and *health,* who are now so near those true comforts.

. . . . . .

For myself, dear mother, I always feared sickness more than death, because sickness hath made me unable to perform those offices for which I came into the world, and must yet be kept in it; but you are freed from that fear, who have already abundantly discharged that part, having both ordered your family, and so brought up your children, that they have attained to the years of discretion and competent maintenance. So that now, if they do not well, the fault cannot be charged on you, whose example and care of them will justify you both to the world and your own conscience; insomuch that, whether you turn your thoughts on the life past, or on the joys that are to come, you have strong preservatives against all disquiet. And for temporal afflictions, I beseech you consider, all that can happen to you are either afflictions of *estate,* or *body,* or *mind.* For those of estate, of what poor regard ought they to be? Since, if we had riches, we are commanded to give them away: so that the best use of them is, having, not to have them. But perhaps, being above the common people, our credit and estimation calls on us to live in a more splendid fashion: but, O God! easily is that answered, when we consider that the blessings in the holy Scripture are never given to the rich, but to the poor. I never find, "Blessed be the rich," or "Blessed be the noble;" but, "Blessed be the meek," and "Blessed be the poor;" and "Blessed be the mourners, for they shall be comforted." And, yet, O God! most carry themselves so, as if they not only not desired, but even fear to be blessed. And for afflictions of the body, remember the holy martyrs of God, how they have been burned by thousands, and have endured such other tortures, as the very mention of them might beget amazement; but their fiery trials have had an end; and yours—which, praised be God, are less—are not like to continue long. I beseech you, let such thoughts as these moderate your present fear and sorrow; and know, that if any of yours should prove a Goliath-like trouble, yet you may say with David, "That God who hath delivered me out of the paws of the lion and bear, will also deliver me out of the hands of this uncircumcised Philistine." Lastly, for those afflictions of the soul, consider that God intends that to be as a *sacred temple*, for himself to dwell in, and will not allow any room there for such an inmate as grief; or allow that any sadness shall be his competitor. And, above all, if any care of future things molest you, remember those admirable words of the Psalmist, "Cast thy care upon the Lord, and he shall nourish thee,"(¹) to which join that of St. Peter, "Casting all your care on the Lord, for he careth for you." (²) What an admirable thing is this, that God puts his shoulder to our burden, and entertains our care for us, that we may the more quietly intend his service!

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Your most obedient Son,
George Herbert.

LETTER CLXXVI.

George Herbert to his Sister, in her sickness.

Trinity College, December 6, 1620.

Most dear Sister,

Think not my silence forgetfulness; or, that my love is as dumb as my papers: though business may stop my hand, yet my heart, a much better member, is always with you; and which is more, with our good and gracious God, incessantly begging some ease of your pains, with that earnestness that becomes your griefs and my love. God, who knows and sees this writing, knows also that my soliciting him has been much, and my tears many for you; judge me then by those waters,

(¹) Psalm lv. 22. (²) 1 Pet. v. 7.

and not by my ink; and then you shall justly value

Your most truly, most heartily affectionate
brother and servant,
GEORGE HERBERT.

LETTER CLXXVII.

ROBERT, EARL OF LEICESTER, to his daughter, DOROTHY, COUNTESS OF SUNDERLAND, on the death of her husband, who fell at the battle of Newbury.

MY DEAR DOLL, Oxford, Oct. 10, 1643.

I know it is to no purpose to advise you not to grieve; that is not my intention; for such a loss as yours cannot be received indifferently by a nature so tender and so sensible as yours; but, though your affection to him whom you loved so dearly, and your reason in valuing his merit (neither of which you could do too much) did expose you to the danger of that sorrow which now oppresseth you; yet, if you consult with that affection, and with that reason, I am persuaded that you will see cause to moderate that sorrow; for your affection to that worthy person may tell you, that even to it you cannot justify yourself, if you lament his being raised to a degree of happiness, far beyond any that he did or could enjoy upon the earth; such as depends upon no uncertainties, nor can suffer no diminution; and wherein, though he knew your sufferings, he could not be grieved at your afflictions. And your reason will assure you, that beside the vanity of bemoaning that which hath no remedy, you offend him whom you loved, if you hurt that person whom he loved. Remember how apprehensive he was of your dangers, and how sorry for any thing that troubled you: imagine that he sees how you afflict and hurt yourself; you will then believe, that, though he looks upon it without any perturbation, for that cannot be admitted by that blessed condition wherein he is, yet he may censure you, and think you forgetful of the friendship that was between you, if you pursue not his desires, in being careful yourself, who was so dear unto him. But he sees you not, he knows not what you do. Well, what then? Will you do any thing that would displease him if he knew it, because he is where he doth not know it? I am sure that was never in your thoughts; for the rules of your actions were, and must be, virtue and affection to your husband, not the consideration of his ignorance or knowledge of what you do; that is but an accident; neither do I think that his presence was at any time more than a circumstance not at all necessary to your abstaining from those things which might displease him. Assure yourself, that all the sighs and tears that your heart and eyes can sacrifice unto your grief, are not such testimonies of your affection as the taking care of those whom he loved, that is, of yourself and of those pledges of your mutual friendship and affection which he hath left with you; and which, though you would abandon yourself, may justly challenge of you the performance of their father's trust reposed in you, to be careful of them. For their sakes therefore assuage your grief: they all have need of you, and one, especially, whose life as yet doth absolutely depend on yours. I know you lived happily, so as nobody but yourself could measure the contentment of it. I rejoiced at it, and did thank God for making me one of the means to procure it for you. That now is past; and I will not flatter you so much as to say, I think you can ever be so happy in this life again; but this comfort you owe me, that I may see you bear this change and your misfortunes patiently. I shall be more pleased with that than with the other, by as much as I esteem virtue and widsom in you more than inconstant benefits that fortune could bestow upon you. It is likely that, as many others do, you will use examples to authorize the present passion which possesseth you; and you may say, that our Saviour himself did weep for the death of one he loved. That is true; but we must not adventure too far after his example in that, no more than a child should run into a river, because he saw a man wade through, for neither his sorrow nor any other passion could make him sin; but it is not so with us. He was pleased to take our infirmities, but he hath not imparted to us his power to limit or restrain them; for if we let our passions loose, they will grow headstrong, and deprive us of the power which we must reserve to ourselves, that we may recover the government which our reason and our religion ought to have above them. I doubt not but your eyes are full of tears, and not the emptier for those they shed. God comfort you; and let us join in prayer to him, that he will be pleased to give his grace to you, to your mother, and to myself, that all of us may resign and submit ourselves entirely and cheerfully to his pleasure; so nothing shall be able to make us unhappy in this life, nor to hinder us from being happy in that which is eternal. Which, that you may enjoy at the end of your days, whose number I wish as great as of any mortal creature; and that through them all you may find such comforts as are best and most necessary for you, it is, and shall ever be, the constant prayer of your father, that loves you dearly.

LETTER CLXXVIII.

Philip Henry to his Cousins, who in a very short time had lost all their children by the small-pox.

Dear Cousins,

This is to you both, whom God hath made one in the conjugal relation, and who are also one in the present affliction; only to signify to you that we do heartily sympathize with you in it. The trial is, indeed, sharp; and there will be need of all the wisdom and grace you have, and of all the help of friends you can get, both to bear and improve it aright. You must bear it in silence and submission.

Surely it is meet to be said unto God, I have borne chastisement. He is Sovereign Lord of all, and may do with us, and ours, as pleaseth him. It is not for the clay to quarrel with the potter. It was a mercy you had children, and comfort with them so long; it is a mercy that yet you have one another; and your children are not lost, but gone before, a little before, whither you yourselves are hastening after. And, if a storm be coming, (as God grant it be not,) it is best with them that first put into the harbour. Your children are taken away from the evil to come, and you must not mourn as they that have no hope. Sensible you cannot but be, but dejected and sullen you must not be; that will but put more bitterness into the cup, and make way for another, perhaps a sharper stroke. You must not think, and I hope you do not, that there cannot be a sharper stroke; for God hath many arrows in his quiver; he can heat the furnace seven times hotter, and again, and again, seven times hotter, till he hath consumed us; and, if he should do so, yet still we must say, he hath *punished us less than our iniquities have deserved.* For examples of patience in the like kind we have two eminent ones in the book of God; those are Job and Aaron: of the latter it is said, "He held his peace;"(1) and that which quieted him, was what his brother Moses said to him. This is that which the Lord hath said, I will be sanctified; and, if God be sanctified, Aaron is satisfied; if God have glory from it, Aaron hath nothing to say against it. Of the former it is said, he *fell down*, but it was to *worship* : (¹) and we are told how he expressed himself, "*The Lord gave and the Lord hath taken, blessed be the name of the Lord.*" He acknowledgeth God in all; and indeed, this is it, my dear cousins, that you must satisfy yourselves with under this sad providence, that the Lord hath done it, and the same will that ordered the thing itself, ordered all the circumstances of it; and who are we that we should dispute with our Maker? "*Let the postsherds strive with the potsherds of the earth, but let not the thing formed say unto him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus?*" And as for the improvement of this affliction, (which, I hope, both of you earnestly desire, for it is a great loss to lose such a providence, and not to be made better by it,) I conceive there are four lessons which it should teach you, and they are good lessons, and should be well learned, for the advantage of them is unspeakable. 1. It should ever *embitter sin* to you: you know what she said to the prophet, "Art thou come to call my sins to remembrance, and to slay my son?" (²) It is sin—sin, that is, the old kill-friend, the Jonah that hath raised this storm, the Achan that hath troubled your house; then, how should you grow in your hatred of it, and endeavours against it, that you may be the death of that which hath been the death of your dear children! I say, the death of it, for nothing less will satisfy

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(1) Lev. x. 3.

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(1) Job, i. 20.

(2) 1 Kings, xvii. 18.

the true penitent, than the death of such a malefactor. 2. *It should be a spur to you, to put you on in heaven's way;* it may be you were growing remiss in duty, beginning to slack your former pace in religion, and your heavenly Father saw it, and was grieved at it; and sent this sad providence to be your monitor, to tell you, you should remember whence you are fallen, and do your first works, and be more humble, and holy, and heavenly, self-denying, and watchful, abounding always in the work of the Lord. Oh, blessed are they that come out of such a furnace thus refined; they will say hereafter, it was a happy day for them that ever they were put in. 3. You must learn by it, as long as you live, *to keep your affections in due bounds towards creature comforts.* How hard is it to love, and not to *over* love; to delight in children, or yoke-fellows, and not *over* delight: now, God is a jealous God, and will not give his glory to any other; and our excess this way doth often provoke him to remove that mercy from us, which we do thus make an idol of; and our duty is to labour when he doth so, to get that matter amended, and to rejoice in all our enjoyments with trembling, and as if we rejoiced not. 4. It should be a means of drawing *your hearts and thoughts more upwards and homewards;* I mean your everlasting home. You should be looking oftener now than before into the other world. "I shall go to him," saith David, when his little son was gone before. It is yet but a little while ere all the things of time shall be swallowed up in eternity. And the matter is not great, whether we or ours die first, while we are all dying; in the midst of life we are in death :—"What manner of persons then ought we to be." (1) Now, our Lord Jesus Christ himself, and God, even our Father, be your support under, and do you good by this dispensation, and give you a name better than that of sons and daughters. We are daily mindful of you at the throne of grace, in our poor measure, and dearly recommended to you, &c.

LETTER CLXXIX.

John Evelyn, Esq. to his brother G. Evelyn, on the death of his son Richard.

Dear Brother, Says-court, 15th Dec. 1656.

I am so deeply sensible of the affliction which presses you, that I cannot forbear to let you understand how great a share I have in the loss, and how reciprocal it is to us. For your part, I consider that your sex and your knowledge do better fortify you against the common calamities and vicissitudes of these sublunary things; so that precepts to you were but impertinencies: though I also find that the physician himself has some time need of the physician; so that to condole and to counsel those who want nothing to support them but their own virtue, is to relieve them of a considerable part of their affliction. But the fear

(1) 2 Pet. iii. 11.

which I have, that the tenderness of so indulgent a mother's affection (as is that of my dear lady) may insensibly transgress its bounds, to so huge a prejudice as we should all receive by it, (if her immoderate grief should continue,) makes me choose rather, being absent, to contribute what aids I can towards its remedy, than, being present, to renew her sorrows by such expressions of resentiment(1) as of course use to fall from friends, but can add little to the cure, because but compliment. Nor do I hereby extenuate her prudence, whose virtue is able to oppose the rudest assaults of fortune; but present my arguments as an instance of my care, not of my diffidence. I confess there is cause of sadness: but all who are not stoics, know by experience, that in these lugubrious encounters our affections do sometimes outrun our reason. Nature herself has assigned places and instruments to the passions: and it were as well impiety as stupidity to be totally *ἀστόργος* and without natural affection: but we must remember withal, that we grieve not as persons without hope: lest, whilst we sacrifice to our passions, we be found to offend against God, and by indulging an overkind nature, redouble the loss and lose our recompence. Children are such blossoms as every trifling wind deflowers; and to be disordered at their fall, were to be fond of certain troubles, but the most uncertain comforts; whilst the store of the more mature which God has yet left you, invite both your resignation and your gratitude. So extraordinary prosperity as you have hitherto been encircled with, was indeed to be suspected; nor may he think to bear all his sails, whose vessel, like yours, has been driven by the highest gale of felicity. We give hostages to fortune when we bring children into the world: and how unstable this is we know, and must therefore hazard the adventure. God has suffered this for your exercise; seek then as well your consolation in his rod as in his staff. Are you offended that it has pleased him to snatch your pretty babes from the infinite contingencies of so perverse an age, in which there is so little temptation to live? At least consider that your pledges are but gone a little before you, and that a part of you has taken possession of the inheritance, which you must one day enter, if ever you will be happy. Brother, when I reflect on the loss as it concerns our family in general, I could recal my own, and mingle my tears with you, for I have also lost some very dear to me; but when I consider the necessity of submitting to the divine arrests, I am ready to dry them again and be silent. There is nothing of us perished, but deposited; and say not that they might have come later to their destiny: *Magna est felicitas, cito esse felicem:* "It is no small happiness to be *happy quickly*." That which may fortune to all, we ought not to accuse for a few: and it is but reason to support that patiently, which cannot be prevented possibly. But I have now done with the philosopher, and will dismiss you with the divine. "Brother, be not ignorant concerning them which are asleep, that you sorrow not even as others which have no hope: for, if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him." They are the words of St. Paul, and I can add nothing to them. In the meantime auxiliaries against this enemy cannot render it the more formidable: and though all grief of this nature have a just rise, yet may it end in a dangerous fall: our dear mother is a sad instance of it: and I conjure you to use all the art, and all the interest you are able, to compose yourself, and consolate your excellent lady, which (after I have presented my particular resentiments(¹) is what I would have hereby assisted you in, who am,

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(1) Regard.

Dear brother, &c.

"Et consolamini alii alias istis sermonibus."

LETTER CLXXX.

JOHN EVELYN, ESQ. to JEREMY TAYLOR.—Condolence amidst distress and persecution.

REVEREND SIR, London, 18th March, 1655.

It was another extraordinary charity which you did me, when you lately relieved my apprehensions of your danger, by that which I just now received: and though the general persecution reinforce, yet it is your particular which most con-

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(¹) Regards.

cerns me in this sad catalysis and declension of piety to which we are reduced. But, sir, what is now to be done, that the stars of our once bright hemisphere are everywhere pulling from their orbs? I remember where you have said it was the harbinger of the great day.

. . . . . .

For my part, I have learned from your excellent assistances, to humble myself, and to adore the inscrutable paths of the Most High. God and his truth are still the same, though the foundations of the world be shaken. Julianus Redivivus(¹) can shut the schools, indeed, and the temples; but he cannot hinder our private intercourses and devotions, where the breast is the chapel, and our heart is the altar. Obedience founded in the understanding will be the only cure and retreat. God will accept what remains, and supply what is necessary. He is not obliged to externals: the purest ages passed under the cruellest persecutions: it is sometimes necessary; and this and the fulfilling of prophecy, are all instruments of great advantage (even while they press, and are incumbent) to those who can make a sanctified use of them. But as the thoughts of many hearts will be discovered, and multitudes scandalized; so there are divers well-disposed persons who will not know how to guide themselves, unless some such good men as you discover the secret, and instruct them how they may secure their greatest interest, and steer

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(¹) He alludes to Oliver Cromwell.

their course in this dark and uncomfortable weather. Some such discourse would be highly seasonable, now that the daily sacrifice is ceasing, and that all the exercise of your functions is made criminal; that the light of Israel is quenched. Where shall we now receive the viaticum with safety? How shall we be baptized? For to this pass it is come, sir. The comfort is, the captivity had no temple, no altar, no king. But did they not observe the passover, nor circumcise? had they no priests and prophets amongst them? Many are weak in the faith, and know not how to answer, nor whither to fly.

Dear sir, we are now preparing to take our last farewell (as they threaten) of God's service in this city, or anywhere else in public. I must confess it is a sad consideration; but it is what God sees best, and to what we must submit. The comfort is, *Deus providebit.*

Sir, I beseech God to conduct all your labours, those of religion to others, and of love and affection to me, who remain,

Sir, yours, &c.

LETTER CLXXXI.

JEREMY TAYLOR to JOHN EVELYN, ESQ.—Persecution not without its advantages.

DEAR SIR,

I perceive by your symptoms how the spirits of pious men are affected in this sad catalysis. It is an evil time, and we ought not to hold our peace: but now the question is, who shall speak? Yet I am highly persuaded, that to good men and wise, a persecution is nothing but a changing the circumstance of religion, and the manner of the forms and appendages of divine worship. Public or private is all one: the first hath the advantage of society, the second of love. There is a warmth and light in that; there is a heat and zeal in this; and if every person that can, will but consider concerning the essentials of religion, and retain them severally, and immure (¹) them as well as he can with the same or equivalent ceremonies, I know no difference in the thing, but that he shall have the exercise, and, consequently, the reward of other graces, for which, if he lives and dies in prosperous days, he shall never be crowned. But the evils are, that some will be tempted to quit their present religion, and some to take a worse, and some to take none at all. It is a true and a sad story; but *oportet esse hæreses,* for so they that are faithful shall be known; and I am sure he that hath promised to bring good out of evil, and that all things shall co-operate to the good of them that fear God, will verify it concerning persecution. But concerning a discourse upon the present state of things, in relation to souls and our present duty, I agree with you that it is very fit it were done, but yet by somebody who is in London, and sees the personal necessities and circumstances of pious people.

(¹) Entrench.

. . . . . .

Sir, I know not when I shall be able to come to London; for our being stripped of the little relics of our fortune, remaining after the shipwreck, leaves not cordage nor sails sufficient to bear me thither. But I hope to be able to commit to the press my first books of conscience by Easter-time; and then, if I be able to get up, I shall be glad to wait on you; of whose good I am not more solicitous than I am joyful you so carefully provide for it in your best interest. I shall only give you the same prayer and blessing that St. John gave to Gaius: "Beloved, I wish that you may be in health and prosper:" and your soul prospers; for so, by the rules of the best rhetoric, the greatest affair is put into a parenthesis, and the biggest business into a postcript. Sir, I thank you for your kind expressions at the latter end of your letter. You have never troubled me, neither can I pretend to any other return from you, but that of your love and prayers. In all things else I do but my duty, and I hope God and you will accept it; and that, by means of his own procurement, he will, some way or other, (but how I know not yet,) make provisions for me.

Sir, I am, in all heartiness of affection,
Your most affectionate friend,
and minister in the Lord Jesus,
JER. TAYLOR.

LETTER CLXXXII.

Jeremy Taylor to John Evelyn, Esq., on the death of his two sons.

Dear Sir, Feb. 17, 1658.

If dividing and sharing griefs were like the cutting of rivers, I dare say to you, you would find your stream much abated; for I account myself to have a great cause of sorrow, not only in the diminution of the number of your joys and hopes, but in the loss of that pretty person, your strangely hopeful boy. I cannot tell all my own sorrows without adding to yours; and the causes of my real sadness in your loss are so just and so reasonable, that I can no otherwise comfort you but by telling you, that you have very great cause to mourn: so certain it is that grief does propagate as fire does. You have enkindled my funeral torch, and by joining mine to yours, I do but increase the flame. "*Hoc me malè urit,*" is the best signification of my apprehension of your sad story. But, sir, I cannot choose, but I must hold another and a brighter flame to you, it is already burning in your heart; and if I can but remove the dark side of the lantern, you have enough within you to warm yourself, and to shine to others. Remember, sir, your two boys are two bright stars, and their innocence is secured, and you shall never hear evil of them again. Their state is safe, and heaven is given to them upon very easy terms; nothing but to be born and die. It will cost you more trouble to get where they are; and amongst other things one of the hardnesses will be, that you must overcome even this just and reasonable grief; and, indeed, though the grief hath but too reasonable a cause, yet it is much more reasonable that you master it. For besides that they are no losers, but you are the person that complains, do but consider what you would have suffered for their interest: you would have suffered them to go from you, to be great princes in a strange country: and if you can be content to suffer your own inconvenience for their interest, you command [commend] your worthiest love, and the question of mourning is at an end. But you have said and done well, when you look upon it as a rod of God; and he that so smites here, will spare hereafter; and if you, by patience and submission, imprint the discipline upon your own flesh, you kill the cause and make the effect very tolerable; because it is, in some sense, chosen, and therefore, in no sense insufferable. Sir, if you do not look to it, time will snatch your honour away from you, and reproach you for not effecting that by Christian philosophy, which time will do alone. And if you consider, that of the bravest men in the world, we find the seldomest stories of their children, and the apostles had none, and thousands of the worthiest persons, that sound most in story, died childless; you will find it is a rare act of Providence so to impose upon worthy men a necessity of perpetuating their names by worthy actions and discourses, governments and reasonings.

If the breach be never repaired, it is because God does not see it fit to be; and if you will be of his mind, it will be much the better. But, sir, you will pardon my zeal and passion for your comfort: I will readily confess that you have no need of any discourse from me to comfort you. Sir, now you have opportunity of serving God by passive graces, strive to be an example and a comfort to your lady; and by your wise counsel and comfort, stand in the breaches of your own family, and make it appear that you are more to her than ten sons. Sir, by the assistance of Almighty God, I purpose to wait on you some time next week, that I may be a witness of your Christian courage and bravery; and that I may see that God never displeases you as long as the main stake is preserved; I mean your hopes and confidences of heaven. Sir, I shall pray for all that you can want, that is, some degrees of comfort and a present mind; and I shall always do you honour, and fain also would do you service, if it were in the power, as it is in the affections and desires of,

Dear sir,
Your most affectionate
And obliged friend and servant,
JEREMY TAYLOR.

LETTER CLXXXIII.

S. RUTHERFORD to the LADY ARDROSS, on the death of her mother.

MADAM, London, Feb. 24, 1646.

Grace, mercy, and peace be to you. It hath seemed good, as I hear, to Him who hath appointed the bounds for the number of our months, to gather a sheaf of ripe corn (in the death of your Christian mother) into his garner. It is the more evident that winter is near when apples, without violence of wind, do of their own accord fall off the tree. She is now above the winter, with a little change of place, not of a Saviour. She enjoyeth Him now without messages, and in his own immediate presence, from whom she heard by letters and messengers before. I grant death is to her a very new thing; but heaven was prepared of old; and Christ, enjoyed in his highest throne, loaded with glory, and incomparably exalted above men and angels, having such a heavenly circle of glorified harpers and musicians above, "compassing the throne with a song," is to her a new thing, but so new as the first summer rose, or the first fruits of that heavenly field; or as a new paradise to the traveller, broken and worn out of breath with the sad occurrences of a long and dreary way. . . . O what a spring time is there! Even the smelling of the odours of that great and eternally blooming Rose of Sharon for ever and ever! What a singing life is there! There is not a dumb bird in all that large field, but all sing and breathe out heaven, joy, glory, dominion, to the High Prince of that new-found land. And verily the land is the sweeter that Jesus Christ paid so dear a rent for it; and that He is the glory of the land: all which, I hope, doth not so much mitigate and allay your grief for her part, (as truly this should seem sufficient,) as the unerring expectation of the dawning of that day upon yourself, and the hope you have of the fruition of that same King and kingdom to your own soul. Certainly the hope of it, when things look so dark-like on both kingdoms, must be an exceeding great quickening to languishing spirits, who are far from home while we are here. What misery to have both a bad way all the day and no hope of lodging at night: but he hath taken up your lodging for you. I can say no more now: but I pray that the very God of peace may establish your heart to the end.

I rest, madam, your Ladyship's,

S. R.

LETTER CLXXXIV.

Dr. Owen to the Lady Hartopp, on the loss of a child.

Dear Madam,

Every work of God is good; the Holy One in the midst of us will do no iniquity; and all things shall work together for good unto them that love him; even those things which at present are not joyous, but grievous; only his time is to be waited for, and his way submitted unto, that we seem not to be displeased in our hearts, that he is Lord over us. Your dear infant is in the eternal enjoyment of the fruits of all our prayers, for the covenant of God is ordered in all things, and sure: we shall go to her; she shall not return to us. Happy she was in this above us, that she had so speedy an issue of sin and misery, being born only to exercise your faith and patience, and to glorify God's grace in her eternal blessedness. My trouble would be great on the account of my absence at this time from you both, but that this also is the Lord's doing; and I know my own uselessness wherever I am. But this I will beg of God for you both, that you may not faint in this day of trial, that you may have a clear view of those spiritual and temporal mercies wherewith you are yet intrusted, all undeserved; that sorrow of the world may not so overtake your hearts, as to disenable to any duties, to grieve the Spirit, to prejudice your lives; for it tends to death. God in Christ will be better to you than ten children, and will so preserve your remnant, and so add to them, as shall be for his glory and your comfort: only consider, that sorrow in this case is no duty; it is an effect of sin, whose cure by grace we should endeavour. Shall I say, be cheerful? I know I may. God help you to honour grace and mercy in a compliance therewith. My heart is with you, my prayers shall be for you, and am,

Dear madam,
Your most affectionate friend and unworthy pastor,
J. OWEN.

LETTER CLXXXV.

Dr. Owen to **Mrs. Polhill**, on the loss of a near relative.

Dear Madam,

The trouble expressed in yours is a great addition to mine: the sovereignty of divine wisdom and grace is all that I have at this day to retreat unto; God direct you thereunto also, and you will find rest and peace. It adds to my trouble that I cannot possibly come down to you this week: nothing but engaged duty could keep me from you one hour; yet I am conscious how little I can contribute to your guidance in this storm, or your satisfaction. Christ is your pilot, and however the vessel is tossed whilst he seems to sleep, he will arise and rebuke these winds and waves in his own time. I have done it, and yet shall further wrestle with God for you, according to the strength he is pleased to communicate. Little it is which at this distance I can mind you of, yet some few things are necessary. Sorrow not too much for the dead: she is entered into rest, and is taken away from the evil to come. Take heed lest by too much grief, you too much grieve that Holy Spirit, who is infinitely more to us than all natural relations. I blame you not that you so far attend to the call of God in this dispensation, as to search yourself, to judge and condemn yourself: grace can make it an evidence to you, that you shall not be judged or condemned of the

Lord. I dare not say that this chastisement was not needful. We are not "in heaviness unless need be;" but if God be pleased to give you a discovery of the wisdom and care that is in it, and how needful it was to awaken and restore your soul in any thing, perhaps in many things, in due time you will see grace and love in it also. I verily believe God expects, in this dealing with you, that you should judge yourself, your sins, and your decays; but he would not have you misjudge your condition. But we are like froward children, when they are rebuked and corrected, neglect other things, and only cry that their parents hate and reject them. You are apt to fear, to think and say, that you are one whom God regards not, who are none of his, and that for sundry reasons which you suppose you can plead. But, saith God,—"This is not the business; this is a part of your frowardness. I call you to quicken your grace, to amend your ways; and you think you have nothing to do but to question my love." Pray, madam, my dear sister, child, and care, beware you lose not the advantage of this dispensation: you will do so, if you use it only to afflictive sorrows, or questioning of the love of God, or your interest in Christ. The time will be spent in these things, which should be taken up in earnest endeavours after a compliance with God's will, quickenings of grace, returns after backsliding, mortification of sin and love of the world, until the sense of it do pass away. Labour vigorously to bring your soul to this twofold resolution. 1st. That the will of God is the best rule for all things, and their circumstances. 2ndly. That you will bring yourself into a fresh engagement to live more to him; and you will find the remainder of your work easy, for it is part of the yoke of Christ. I shall trouble you no further but only to give you the assurance that you are in my heart continually, which is nothing; but it helps to persuade me that you are in the heart of Christ, which is all.

I am, dear madam,
Your very affectionate servant,
J. OWEN.

LETTER CLXXXVI.

DR. HAMMOND to a **FRIEND**; at a period of great public calamities.

SIR, Sept. 2.

I have received your last, and acknowledge the great fitness of it to the present opportunities under which God hath pleased to place us. If we look about us there was never any louder call to lamentation and bitter mourning; and the sharpest accents of these are visibly due to those continued provocations which appear to have wrought all our woe: yet there is not wanting some gleam of light, if we shall yet, by God's grace, be qualified to make use of it. It is the supreme privilege of Christianity to convert the saddest evils into the most medicinal advantages, the valley of *Achor* into the door of hope, the blackest tempest into the most perfect *ευδια*: and it is certain you have an excellent opportunity now before you to improve and receive benefit thereby; and you will not despise that affliction which attempts to tell you somewhat of it. It is plainly this; that all kind of prosperity is treacherous and dangerous, and might very probably tend to our great ills, and nothing is so entirely safe and wholesome as to be continued under God's discipline. Those that are not bettered by such methods, would certainly be intoxicated and destroyed by the pleasanter draughts; and those that would ever serve God sincerely in affluence, have infinitely greater advantages and opportunities for it in the adverse fortune. Therefore let us now all adore and bless God's wisest choices, and set vigorously to the task that lies before us; improving the present advantages, and supplying, in the abundance of the inward beauty, what is wanting to the outward lustre of a church; and we shall not fail to find that the grots and caves lie as open to the celestial influences as the fairest and most beautiful temples. We are ordinarily very willing to be rich, and flatter ourselves that our aims are no other than to be enabled by much wealth to do much good: and some live to see themselves confuted; want hearts when wealth comes in greatest abundance; so those that never come to make the experiment, have yet reason to judge that God saw it fit not to lead them into temptation, lest, if they had been proved, they should have been found faithless. And the same judgment are we now obliged to pass for ourselves, and by what God appears to have chosen for us, to resolve what he sees to be absolutely best for us; and it must be our greatest blame and wretchedness, if what hath now befallen us be not effectually better for us than whatever else, even piety, could have suggested to us to wish or to pray for. And then, I pray, judge candidly whether any thing be in any degree sober or tolerable in any of us, beside the one great necessary wisdom, as well as duty, of resignation, and making God's choices ours also.

I have been these three weeks under restraint, by the gout and other pains, and am not yet on my legs; yet, blessed be God, have all causes of thanksgiving, none of repining. And I shall with confidence pray and hope that the great multitudes of persons and families that are now under far sharper exercises, will find as much greater allays and sweetnesses, and the black cloud (as oft as it hath done) vanish undiscernibly.

LETTER CLXXXVII.

DR. FITZWILLIAM to LADY RACHEL RUSSELL, some months after the execution of Lord Russell.

Cotenham, 7th May, 1684.

. . . . . .

I do believe most easily, (and should without your declaration have guessed,) when you come to Straton, whither business seems rather to summon you than your own inclinations to carry you, your grief will be apt to renew itself; that the very place where you have so often enjoyed your lord, envying the greatest happiness of none, while you possest him, will refresh this image of him (who is so perpetually in your thoughts and memory now) on your imagination then, and the destitution of his real self, will, when you reflect that all the fruition you have left of him, is merely his figure in your fancy, cause a stronger sense of your loss, than you have constantly at Wobourn, (where he and you were not so much conversant as at Straton,) so too, a sharper fit of grief than you there feel.

But this is that against which you are to oppose your whole self; and, as I remember I directed you, you are not to permit your thoughts to dwell on the object God hath removed from you, nor permit them perpetually to compare your present sad condition with your former pleasing one, in that place; for, if you do, you will not act according to your professions, much less your duty, in striving against immoderate sorrow; but you lay yourself down under it. And you may as reasonably suppose my thoughts can be fixed on a foul object, and I not corrupted, as that yours can be employed on your lord, and the sweet contentment of enjoying him there, and yet not be saddened to a degree of sin.

You are, therefore, madam, to divert your thoughts to another kind of reflection, and consider, not so much what God hath taken from you lately at Straton, as what he has left you still untouched at Wobourn. And that if you grieve too much for the one (for I will not think you repine) you may provoke him to increase the troubled stream with plenteousness of tears, by resiezing into his own hands some parcel of that happiness which he is yet pleased to continue to you in yours there.

Madam, you are to meditate on this, that though you cannot enjoy your lord at Straton, yet you may, unless it be your own fault, your God there. And you are to labour, from such meditations, to say truly with your heart:—How amiable and delightful is this place, where He, who is infinitely more valuable to me than the person he gave me, and hath taken away hence, and in whom that person was or ought only to have been dear to me, and this place grateful; the God of all love, and all beauty and perfection will choose to cohabit with me as a husband, unless I refuse the condescension, and to abide with me as a comforter, unless I reject the offer, and obstinately deny to be comforted!

You are to bring yourself by such contemplation to this pitch, as to say most sincerely, what I believe you say constantly, Thy will be done, my God and Father! Though I could have been pleased to have enjoyed the harmless delights of this place in fellowship with the man thou gavest me, yet I am fully content, seeing it hath been thy pleasure, always directed with wisdom and tempered with goodness, to demand him from me, to enjoy thee by communication with thee in my thoughts, and aspirations after thee in my desires. Seeing the one was thy will by thy dispensations to him, and the other was thy will in thy creating and redeeming me, this shall be my will too; and by this identity of will I will be united to thee, from whose love no tribulation nor distress can separate me; my own voluntary sins alone can divide me."

I beseech God to give a blessing to these hasty prescriptions, (for the carrying away of which to the post the messenger stays,) that they may conduce to the doing you that good they are designed for.

I am, &c.

J. F.

LETTER CLXXXVIII.

Bishop Burnet to Lady Russell, on the death of her son.

Salisbury, 30th May, 1711.

I cannot keep myself from writing, though I cannot tell how to express the deep sense I have of this heavy stroke with which God is trying your faith and patience. To lose the only son of such a father, who was become so truly his son in all respects, is, indeed, anew opening a deep wound, which God had by many special providences, for several years, been binding up and healing. But now you will see whether you can truly say, "Not my will, but thy will be done." For God's sake, do not abandon yourself once more into a deep inconsolable melancholy: rouse up the spirit God has given you, and say, "the Lord has given, the Lord has taken; blessed be the name of the Lord." When God took his blessed father, he was left as a branch to spring up in his stead: now God has taken him; but the branches are left in whom he is to live again. Remember you are now much older than when you suffered yourself to sink so much under a great though a just load. You cannot now stand under what you bore then: and you do not know but that, as God has helped you in so eminent a manner to do your duty to your own children, he may yet have a great deal for you to do to your children's children; and, therefore, study to compose your spirits into a resignation to the holy will of God, and see what remains for you yet to be done, before your course is finished. I could not help giving this vent to that true and hearty concern I have in every thing that touches you in so tender a part. I can do no more but follow this with my most earnest prayers to the God of all comfort for you and all yours, more particularly for the sweet remnants of him whom God has taken to himself.

I am, beyond all expression,
Madam,
Your most humble and most obedient servant,
GI. SARUM.

LETTER CLXXXIX.

Lady Russell to a noble **Lord**.—The difference between Stoicism and Christianity.

July, 1689.

For my part, I think the man a very indifferent reasoner, that to do well, he must take with indifference whatever happens to him. It is very fine to say, "Why should we complain that is taken back which was but lent us, and lent us but for a time, we know;" and so on. They are the receipts of philosophy I have no reverence for, as I have not for any thing which is unnatural. It is insincere: and I dare say they did dissemble, and felt what they would not own. I know I cannot dispute with Almighty power; but yet if my delight is gone, I must needs be sorry it is taken away, according to the measure it made me glad.

The Christian religion only, believe me, my lord, has a power to make the spirit easy under great calamity: nothing less than the hope of being again made happy can satisfy the mind. I am sure I owe more to it, than I could have done to the world, if all the glories of it could have been offered me, or to be disposed of by me. And I do sincerely desire your lordship may experience the truth of my opinion. You know better than most, from the share you have had of the one, what they do afford; and I hope you will prove what tranquillity the other gives. If I had a better wish to make, your lordship's constant expressions of me, and willingness, as I hope, to have had me less miserable than I am, if you had found your power equal to your will, engages me to make it; and that alone would have bound me, though my own unworthiness and ill-fortune had let you have forgot me for ever after my sad lot. But since you would not do so, it must deserve a particular acknowledgment for ever, from your lordship's, &c.

R. R.

LETTER CXC.

Archbishop Leighton to his Brother-in-law, on the death of a singularly sweet and promising child.

Edinburgh, Jan. 16.

I am glad of your health and recovery of your little ones; but indeed it was a sharp stroke of a pen that told me your pretty Johnny was dead; and I felt it truly more than, to my remembrance, I did the death of any child in my life-time. Sweet thing! and is he so quickly laid to sleep? Happy he! Though we shall have no more the pleasure of his lisping and laughing, he shall have no more the pain of crying, nor of being sick, nor of dying; and hath wholly escaped the trouble of schooling, and all other sufferings of boys, and the riper and deeper griefs of riper years; this poor life being all along nothing but a linked chain of many sorrows and many deaths. Tell my dear sister she is now so much more akin to the other world; and this will quickly be passed to us all. John is but gone an hour or two sooner to bed, as children use to do, and we are undressing to follow. And the more we put off the love of this present world and all things superfluous, beforehand, we shall have less to do when we lie down. It shall refresh me to hear from you at your leisure.

Sir, your affectionate brother,
R. LEIGHTON.

LETTER CXCI.

REV. JOHN HOWE to LADY RACHAEL RUSSELL, shortly after the execution of her noble husband.—One of the noblest and most pathetic pieces of epistolary composition in the language.

MADAM,

It can avail you nothing, to let your honour know from what hand this paper comes; and my own design in it is abundantly answered, if what it contains proves useful to you. Your affliction hath been great, unspeakably beyond what it is in my power or design to represent; and your supports (in the paroxysm of your affliction) have been very extraordinary; and such as wherein all that have observed or heard, could not but acknowledge a divine hand.

But your affliction was not limited and enclosed within the limits of one black day, nor is like those more common ones, the sense whereof abates and wears off by time; but is continued, and probably more felt as time runs on: which, therefore, makes you need continued help from heaven every day.

Yet there is here a great difference between what expectations we may have of divine assistance, in the beginning or first violence of some great affliction, and in the continued course of it afterwards. At first we are apt to be astonished, a consternation seizes our thinking faculty, especially as to that exercise of it whereby it should minister to our relief. In this case the merciful God doth more extraordinarily assist such as sincerely trust and resign themselves to him; unto these, as his more peculiar favourites, his sustaining influences are more immediate, and more efficacious, so as even (in the present exigency) to prevent and supersede any endeavour of theirs; whereof they are then less capable. And of the largeness and bounty of his goodness, in such a case, few have had greater experience than your ladyship; which was eminently seen in that magnanimity, that composure and presentness of mind, much admired by your friends, and no doubt, by the special favour of Heaven, afforded you in the needful season: so that while that amazing calamity was approaching, and stood in nearer view, nothing that was fit or wise, or great was omitted; nothing indecent done. Which is not now said, God knows, to flatter your ladyship; (whereof the progress will further vindicate me;) for I ascribe it to God, as I trust your ladyship, with unfeigned gratitude, will also do. And I mention it, as that whereby you are under obligation to endeavour, your continued temper and deportment may be agreeable to such beginnings.

For now (which is the other thing, whereof a distinct observation ought to be had) in the continuance and settled state of the affliction, when the fury of the first assault is over, and we have had leisure to recollect ourselves, and recover our dissipated spirits, though we are then more sensible of pain and smart, yet also the power of using our own thoughts is restored. And being so, although we are too apt to use them to our greater hurt and prejudice, we are really put again into a capacity of using them to our advantage, which our good God doth, in much wisdom and righteousness, require we should do. Whereupon we are to expect his continual assistance for our support under continued affliction, in the way of concurrence and co-operation with our due use of our own thoughts, aptly chosen, as much as in us is, and designed by ourselves for our own comfort and support.

Now as for thoughts suitable to your honour's case, I have reason to be conscious that what I shall write can make but little accession, I will not say to a closet, but to a mind so well furnished as you are owner of: yet I know it is remote from you to slight a well-intended offer and essay, that really proceeds only from a very compassionate sense of your sorrows, and unfeigned desire to contribute something (if the Father of mercies, and the God of all comforts and consolations will please to favour the endeavour) to your relief.

And the *thoughts* which I shall most humbly offer, will have that first and more immediate design,—to persuade your making use of *your own ;* that is, that you would please to turn and apply them to subjects more apt to serve this purpose,—the moderating your own grief, and the attaining an habitual well-tempered cheerfulness for your remaining time in this world. For I consider how incident it is to the afflicted, to indulge to themselves an unlimited liberty in their sorrows, to give themselves up to them, to make them meat and drink, to justify them in all their excesses, as that (otherwise) good and holy man of God did his anger, and say, they do well to be sorrowful even to the death, and (as another) to refuse to be comforted. And I also consider that our own thoughts must, and will always be the immediate ministers either of our trouble or comfort, though as to the latter, God only is the supreme author; and we altogether insufficient to think any thing that good is, as of ourselves. It is God that comforts those that are cast down, but by our own thoughts employed to that purpose, not without them.

I do not doubt, madam, but if you once fixedly apprehend that there is sin in an over-abounding sorrow, you will soon endeavour its restraint: for I cannot think you would more earnestly set yourself to avoid any thing, than what you apprehend will offend God, especially the doing that in a continued course. Is there any time when joy in God is a duty? It is very plain the sorrow that excludes it is a sin. How the former may appear to be a duty, and how far, let it be considered.

It is not to be doubted, but that he that made us hath a right to rule us; he that gave us being, to give us law: nor again, that the divine government reaches our minds, and that they are the prime and first seat of his empire. His kingdom is within us. We are not, then, to exercise our thoughts, desires, love, joy, or sorrow according to our own will but his; not as we please, or find ourselves inclined, but suitably to his precepts and purposes, his rules and ends.

It is evident that withal the earthly state is mixed, intermediate between the perfect felicity of heaven and the total misery of hell: and further, that the temper of our spirits ought to have in it a mixture of joy and sorrow, proportionable to our state, or what there is in it of the just occasions or causes of both.

Where Christianity obtains, and the gospel of our Saviour is preached, there is much greater cause of joy than elsewhere. The visible aspect of it imports a design to form men's minds to gladness, inasmuch as wheresoever it comes, it proclaims peace to the world, and represents the offended Majesty of heaven willing to be reconciled to his offending creatures on earth. So the angel prefaced the gospel, when our Lord was born into the world. (1) "I tell you glad tidings of great joy which shall be to all people." And so the multitude of accompanying angels sum it up: "Glory be to God in the highest, peace on earth, good will towards men."

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(1) Luke, ii.

To them that truly receive the gospel, and with whom it hath its effect, the cause of rejoicing riseth much higher. For if the offer and hope of reconciliation be a just ground of joy, how much more actual agreement with God, upon the terms of the gospel, and reconciliation itself! "We rejoice in God through Jesus Christ, by whom we have received the atonement."(¹) To such there are express precepts given to "rejoice in the Lord always." (²) And lest that should be thought to have been spoken hastily, and that it might have its full weight, that great apostle immediately adds, "and again I say to you, rejoice." And elsewhere, "rejoice evermore." (³)

Hence, therefore, the genuine right temper and frame of a truly Christian mind and spirit may be evidently concluded to be this, (for such precepts do not signify nothing, nor can they be understood to signify less,) an habitual joyfulness, prevailing over all the temporary occasions of sorrow that occur to them. For none can be thought of that can preponderate, or be equal to the just and great causes of their joy. This is the true frame, model, and constitution of the kingdom of God, which ought to have place in us; herein it consists, viz. "in

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(¹) Rom. v. 11. (²) Phil. iv. 4. (³) 1 Thes. v. 16.

righteousness and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost." (¹)

Nor is this a theory only, or the idea and notion of an excellent temper of spirit, which we may contemplate indeed, but can never attain to. For we find it also to have been the attainment and usual temper of Christians heretofore, that being justified by faith, and having peace with God, they have rejoiced in hope of the glory of God, unto that degree, as even to glory in their tribulations also. (²) And that in the confidence they should be kept by the power of God, through faith unto salvation, they have hereupon greatly rejoiced, though with some mixture of heaviness (whereof there was need) from their manifold trials. But that their joy did surmount and prevail over their heaviness is manifest; for this is spoken of with much diminution, whereas they are said to "rejoice greatly," and "with a joy unspeakable and full of glory." (³)

Yea, and such care hath the great God taken for the preserving of this temper of spirit among his people more anciently, that even their sorrow for sin itself (the most justifiable of all other) hath had restraints put upon it, lest it should too long exclude or intermit the exercise of this joy. For when a great assembly of them were universally in tears, upon hearing the law read, and the sense given, they were forbidden to weep or mourn, or be sorry, because "the joy of the Lord was their

(¹) Rom. xiv. 17. (²) Rom. v. 1, 2, 3. (³) 1 Pet. i. 5, 6, 8.

strength." (¹) That most just sorrow had been unjust had it been continued, so as to exclude the seasonable turn and alternation of this joy. For even such sorrow itself is not required, or necessary for itself. It is remote from the goodness and benignity of God's ever-blessed nature, to take pleasure in the sorrows of his people, as they are such, or that they should sorrow for sorrow's sake; but only as a means and preparative to their following joy. And nothing can be more unreasonable, than that the means should exclude the end, or be used against the purpose they should serve.

It is, then, upon the whole, most manifest, that no temporary affliction whatsoever, upon one who stands in special relation to God, as a reconciled (and which is consequent an adopted) person, though attended with the most aggravating circumstances, can justify such a sorrow, so deep or so continued, as shall prevail against, and shut out a religious holy joy, or hinder it from being the prevailing principle in such a one. What can make that sorrow allowable or innocent, what event of providence, (that can, whatever it is, be no other than an accident to our Christian state,) that shall resist the most natural design and end of Christianity itself? that shall deprave and debase the truly Christian temper, and disobey and violate most express Christian precepts? subvert the constitution of Christ's kingdom among men, and turn this earth (the place of God's treaty with the inhabi-

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(¹) Nehemiah, viii. 8, 9, 10.

tants of it, in order to their reconciliation to himself, and to the reconciled, the portal and gate of heaven; yea, and where the state of the very worst and most miserable has some mixture of good in it, that makes the evil of it less than that of hell) into a mere hell to themselves, of sorrow without mixture, and wherein shall be nothing but weeping and wailing.

The cause of your sorrow, madam, is exceeding great. The causes of your joy are inexpressibly greater. You have infinitely more left than you have lost. Doth it need to be disputed whether God be better and greater than man? or more to be valued, loved, and delighted in? and whether an eternal relation be more considerable than a temporary one? Was it not your constant sense in your best outward state? "Whom have I in heaven but thee, O God; and whom can I desire on earth in comparison of thee!" (1) Herein the state of your ladyship's case is still the same, (if you cannot rather with greater clearness, and with less hesitation pronounce those latter words.) The principal causes of your joy are immutable, such as no supervening thing can alter. You have lost a most pleasant, delectable earthly relative. Doth the blessed God hereby cease to be the best and most excellent good? Is his nature changed? his everlasting covenant reversed and annulled? which "is ordered in all things and sure," and is to be all your salvation and all your desire, "whether he make your house on earth to grow or not to grow." (2)

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(1) Psalm lxxiii. 25. (2) 2 Sam. xxiii. 4.

That sorrow which exceeds the proportion of its cause, compared with the remaining true and real causes of rejoicing, is, in that excess, causeless; that is, that excess of it wants a cause such as can justify or afford defence unto it.

We are required, in reference to our nearest relations in this world, when we lose them, to weep as if we wept not, as well as when we enjoy them, to "rejoice as if we rejoiced not, because our time here is short, and the fashion of this world passeth away." (1) We are finite beings and so are they. Our passions in reference to them must not be infinite and without limit, or be limited only by the limited capacity of our nature, so as to work to the utmost extent of that, as the fire burns, and the winds blow as much as they can: but they are to be limited by the power, design, and endeavour of our reason and grace, not only by the mere impotency of our nature, in reference to all created objects. Whereas in reference to the infinite uncreated good, towards which there is no danger or possibility of exceeding in our affection, we are never to design to ourselves any limits at all; for that would suppose we had loved God enough, or as much as he deserved, which were not only to limit ourselves, but him too; and were a constructive denial of his infinite immense goodness, and consequently of his very Godhead. Of so great concernment it is to us, that in the liberty we give our affections, we observe the just difference which ought to be in their exercise towards God, and towards creatures.

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(1) 1 Cor. vii. 29, 30, 31.

It is also to be considered, that the great God is pleased so to condescend as himself to bear the name, and sustain the capacity of our nearest earthly relations; which implies that what they were to us in this or that kind, he will be in a transcendent and far more noble kind. I doubt not but your ladyship hath good right to apply to yourself those words of the prophet, "Thy Maker is thy husband, &c." (1) Whereupon, as he infinitely transcends all that is delectable in the most excellent earthly relation, it ought to be endeavoured, that the affection placed on him should proportionably excel. I cannot think any person in the world would be a more severe or impartial judge of a criminal affection than your ladyship: or that it would look worse unto any eye, if any one should so deeply take to heart the death of an unrelated person, as never to take pleasure more, in the life, presence, and conversation of one most nearly related. And you do well know that such a height, (or that supremacy) of affection, as is due to the ever-blessed God, cannot, without great injury, be placed anywhere else. As we are to have none other God before him; so him alone we are to love with all our heart and soul, and might and mind.

And it ought further to be remembered, that whatsoever interest we have or had in any the nearest relative on earth, his interest who made both is far superior. He made us and all things primarily for himself, to serve great and important ends of his own: so that our satisfaction in any creature, is but secondary and collateral to the principal design of its creation.

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(1) Isaiah lvi. 5.

Which consideration would prevent a practical error and mistake that is too usual with pious persons, afflicted with the loss of any near relation, that they think the chief intention of such a providence is their punishment. And hereupon they are apt to justify the utmost excesses of their sorrow, upon such an occasion, accounting they can never be sensible enough of the divine displeasure appearing in it; and make it their whole business, or employ their time and thoughts beyond a due proportion, to find out and fasten upon some particular sin of theirs, which they may judge God was offended with them for, and designed now to punish upon them. It is, indeed, the part of filial ingenuity, deeply to apprehend the displeasure of our Father, and an argument of great sincerity, to be very inquisitive after any sin for which we may suppose him displeased with us, and apt to charge ourselves severely with it, (though, perhaps, upon utmost inquiry, there is nothing particularly to be reflected on, other than common infirmity incident to the best, and it is well when at length we can make that judgment, because there really is no more, not for that we did not enquire,) and, perhaps also, God intended no more in such a dispensation, as to what concerned us in it, than only, in the general, to take off our minds and hearts more from this world, and draw them more entirely to himself. For if we were never so innocent, must therefore such a relative of ours have been immortal? But the error in practice, as to this case, lies here; not that our thoughts are much exercised this way, but too much. We ought to consider in every case, principally, that which is principal. God did not create this or that excellent person, and place him for a while in the world principally to please us; nor therefore doth he take him away principally to displease or punish us; but for much nobler and greater ends which he hath proposed to himself concerning him. Nor are we to reckon ourselves so little interested in the great and sovereign Lord of all, whom we have taken to be our God, and to whom we have absolutely resigned and devoted ourselves, as not to be obliged to consider and satisfy ourselves, in his pleasure, purposes, and ends, more than our own apart from his.

Such as he hath pardoned, accepted, and prepared for himself, are to serve and glorify him in an higher and more excellent capacity, than they ever could in this wretched world of ours, and wherein they have themselves the highest satisfaction. When the blessed God is pleased in having attained and accomplished the end and intendments of his own boundless love, too great to be satisfied with the conferring of only temporary favours in this imperfect state, and they are pleased in partaking the full effects of that love; who are we, that we should be displeased? or that we should oppose our satisfaction, to that of the glorious God, and his glorified creature? Therefore, madam, whereas you cannot avoid to think much on this subject, and to have the removal of that incomparable person, for a great theme of your thoughts, I do only propose most humbly to your honour, that you would not confine them to the sadder and darker part of that theme. It hath also a bright side; and it equally belongs to it, to consider whither he is gone, and to whom, as whence and from whom. Let, I beseech you, your mind be more exercised in contemplating the glories of that state your blessed consort is translated unto, which will mingle pleasure and sweetness with the bitterness of your afflicting loss, by giving you a daily intellectual participation, through the exercise of faith and hope, in his enjoyments. He cannot descend to share with you in your sorrows; you may thus every day ascend and partake with him in his joys. He is a pleasant subject to consider. A prepared spirit made meet for an inheritance with them that are sanctified, and with the saints in light, now entered into a state so connatural, and wherein it finds every thing most agreeable to itself. How highly grateful is it to be united with the true centre, and come home to the Father of spirits! To consider how pleasant a welcome, how joyful an entertainment he hath met with above! How delighted an associate he is with the general assembly, the innumerable company of angels, and the spirits of just men made perfect! How joyful an homage he continually pays to the throne of the celestial King!

Will your ladyship think that an hard saying of our departing Lord to his mournful disciples, "If ye loved me, ye would rejoice, that I said I go to the Father; for my Father is greater than I?" As if he had said, he sits enthroned in higher glory than you can frame any conception of, by beholding me in so mean a condition on earth. We are as remote, and as much short in our thoughts as to the conceiving the glory of the supreme King, as a peasant, who never saw any thing better than his own cottage, from conceiving the splendour of the most glorious prince's court. But if that faith, which is the substance of things hoped for, and the evidence of things not seen, be much accustomed to its proper work and business—the daily delightful visiting and viewing the glorious invisible regions; if it be often conversant in those vast and spacious tracts of pure and brightest light, and amongst the holy inhabitants that replenish them; if it frequently employ itself in contemplating their comely order, perfect harmony, sublime wisdom, unspotted purity, most fervent mutual love, delicious conversation with one another, and perpetual pleasant consent in their adoration and observance of their eternal King! who is there to whom it would not be a solace to think I have such and such friends and relatives, some, perhaps, as dear as my own life, perfectly well pleased, and happy among them! How can your love, madam—so generous a love towards so deserving an object!—how can it but more fervently sparkle in joy, for his sake, than dissolve in tears for your own?

Nor should such thoughts excite over-hasty impatient desires of following presently into heaven, but to the endeavours of serving God more cheerfully on earth for our appointed time: which I earnestly desire your ladyship would apply yourself to, as you would not displease God, who is your only hope, nor be cruel to yourself, nor dishonour the religion of Christians, as if they had no other consolations than this earth can give, and earthly power take from them. Your ladyship (if any one) would be loth to do any thing unworthy your family and parentage. Your highest alliance is to that Father and family above, whose dignity and honour are, I doubt not, of highest account with you.

I multiply words, being loth to lose my design; and shall only add that consideration which cannot but be valuable with you upon his first proposal, who had all the advantages imaginable to give it its full weight; I mean that of those dear pledges left behind. My own heart even bleeds to think of the case of those sweet babes, should they be bereaved of their other parent too. And even your continued visible dejection would be their unspeakable disadvantage. You will always naturally create in them a reverence of you; and I cannot but apprehend how the constant mien, aspect, and deportment of such a parent will insensibly influence the temper of dutiful children; and, if that be sad and despondent, depress their spirits, blunt and take off the edge and quickness upon which their future usefulness and comfort will much depend. Were it possible their now glorious father should visit and inspect you, would you not be troubled to behold a frown in that bright serene face? You are to please a more penetrating eye, which you will best do by putting on a temper and deportment suitable to your weighty charge and duty; and to the great purposes for which God continues you in the world, by giving over unnecessary solitude and retirement, which, though it pleases, doth really prejudice you, and is more than you can bear. Nor can any rules of decency require more. Nothing that is necessary and truly Christian, ought to be reckoned unbecoming. David's example (1) is of too great authority to be counted a pattern of indecency. The God of heaven lift up the light of his countenance upon you, and thereby put gladness into your heart; and give you to apprehend him saying to you, "Arise and walk in the light of the Lord."

That I have used so much freedom in this paper, I make no apology for; but do therefore hide myself in the dark, not judging it consistent with that plainness which I thought the case might require, to give any other account of myself, than that I am one deeply sensible of your, and your noble relatives' great affliction, and who scarce ever bow the knee before the mercy-seat without remembering it, and who shall ever be,

Madam, your ladyship's most sincere honourer,
And most humble devoted servant.

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(1) 2 Sam. xii. 20.

LETTER CXCII.

REV. JOHN HOWE to a FRIEND, on the loss of his wife.

I seriously lament your new affliction, whereof I lately had the surprising account. And I should be the more concerned for it, if I did not consider it hath befallen one who can with judgment estimate and suffer it. He hath enough to relieve him against the ungrateful events which our present state is liable to, who is serious in the belief of God's universal government over this world, and that there is another. The former of these is a principle much abused by some; which no more proves it false than the gospel, out of which some have the mischievous skill to extract a deadly savour. It is our great privilege, for which we ought to be thankful, that by such arguments whereby we can most certainly demonstrate to ourselves that there is a God, we can as certainly prove that he is not an Epicurean God; unto which imaginary idol only that could belong, to be disturbed by being concerned about human affairs. But if he knew the true nature of God better, who came forth from him into our world, on purpose to make him known, we are sufficiently assured, not a hair can fall from our head without him, much less so considerable a part of ourselves.

This is not the state wherein things are to be unexceptionably well. But we have cause, as things are, to acknowledge and adore the wisdom and goodness of Providence, that the wickedness of the world hath not in so many thousand years quite confounded families, and all human society long ago: but that as wise counsel did first settle the institution of those lesser societies, God hath from age to age renewed the impression of that part among others of the law of nature, by which men are prompted as by instinct to preserve them; besides the positive precept he hath given, setting out to each relative, the duty whereby order is to be preserved in them. And when we know his government extends so low, how gladly ought we to submit ourselves to it, and allow him to determine how long we should enjoy such relatives, as well as that there should be any such! For we know that they were appointed but for this temporary state, not for that wherein we are to be as the angels of God in heaven, where each one hath a subordinate self-sufficiency, and needs not the meet helps which the exigency of this state makes so useful. And therefore, the reason as well as the authority of such precepts, is most entirely to be subscribed to, that because "the time is short, they that have wives be as though they had none; they that rejoice" (in having them) "as if they rejoiced not; they that weep" (in losing them) "as though they wept not." So our affections will correspond to the objects, which are of the same make; "for the fashion of this world passeth away." And it were a gloomy thought to consider all as passing and vanishing, if we did not seriously believe, that it vanishes to make way for another, that shall never vanish, and that shall shortly enter in its perfect glory, and fill up the whole stage. Scaffolds are taken down, when the eternal building is finished.

LETTER CXCIII.

Rev. John Howe to Sir Charles and Lady Hoghton, on the death of a most hopeful son.

St. John's Street, London, Jan. 14, 98.

Most worthily honoured Sir, with my dearest and most honoured Lady,

It would be incomparably more grievous to me at this time to write to you, if I were under a necessity of writing nothing but what were mournful and sad. The same thing, if we turn it round, will be found to have a double aspect. That dispensation that represents you deprived of an earthly son, speaks you the parents of a glorified child, more highly dignified than it was possible he could have been on earth. This post brings you greater news than if it had informed you your son is created emperor of Germany, or king of France or Spain. Let us speak and think of things as we believe, and profess to believe. Indeed, if our apprehensions of their state in the unseen world, who were true lovers of God, have nothing of solace and pleasure in them, it is mere useless empty profession they are all to be resolved into, and not faith.

My heart bleeds for you, and with you both; but it can do you no good to tell you so. I believe your lovely son unfeignedly loved God: and then read the rest. (¹) Of how great use might he have been in this world! But are those glorious creatures above, to whom he is now adjoined, unactive or unemployed? And are not their employments more noble and sublime, according to the more enlarged capacity of their faculties, and the higher dignity of their state? He was born to very considerable things as your heir: but he was begotten again to a more glorious inheritance, and the lively hope of it. (²) They that were about him, before it was possible for me to see him, told me he was insensible, as he was before I heard of his illness: but at my coming to him, he knew me at first sight, and seemed to have the use of his understanding for nothing but religion. He then spake not one misplaced word; said he doubted not God was his Father, and that his present affliction was from the hand of that Father, not of an enemy. He desired me to pray with him, and seemed understandingly and affectionately to concur. This was on Lord's-day, and the next was the day of his glorious translation, near noon, before I could reach him a second time.

Mr. C—— came to me presently after, to advise with me about disposal of the body, who could give no advice but in the general, to have it prepared for interment, in a way that might be decent

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(¹) 1 Cor. ii. 9; James, i. 10, 12.

(²) 1 Pet. i. 3.

and not profusely expensive: not doubting but that there might be more particular direction from yourself before actual interment sent to Mr. C——, &c. who is willing to take the care upon him of seeing instructions fulfilled.

The Lord support you both, and abundantly bless the rest of yours.

I am,
Most honoured Sir and Madam,
Your most affectionately sympathizing servant
in Christ our Lord,
JOHN HOWE.

LETTER CXCIV.

REV. JOHN HOWE to a LADY, on the loss of a beloved daughter.

Love-lane, Aldermanbury, Lond. Sept. 29, 94.

DEAR AND HONOURED MADAM,

Did you think two or three months ago such a trial was so near? Such sad futurities God, in mercy to us, hides from us, that we may not afflict ourselves before he afflicts us: and that when he intends we should suffer that particular affliction but once, viz. when it comes, we may not impose so hardly upon ourselves, as to suffer it a thousand times over, before it comes. "Sufficient for the day," &c. If he should have made us all prophets, in reference to all the events of our time, we should bring all the evils of every future day, into every former day; as if the evil of the day were not enough for the day.

But though he gives us not certain predictions of such evils, lest he should torment us, he gives forewarnings lest he should surprise us. He hath told us we must all once die, and not when: that life is a vapour; that all flesh is grass; that the beauty or glory of it is but as the flower of grass; withering things! He hath asserted his own dominion over lives, and over the spirits of all flesh as the God of them, to lodge and dislodge them, where and as he pleases. And who are we, that we should grudge him that dominion? or so much as wish we could have wrested that part of his empire out of his hands? But when he afflicts, it is good to consider, what is it for? It comes not out of the dust, though it may reduce us or ours thither. And if our utmost search cannot find out a particular cause, (wherein we should take heed of being too indulgent and partial to ourselves, but should beg that what we know not he would teach us) yet we should however more earnestly endeavour to improve the affliction to the general end, which we may be sure he aims at; to withdraw our minds from this present world, and state of things; to take heed of being peremptory in laying any designs that must be measured by time, and be subject to the uncertainties of it; to determine nothing but with that reserve, "if God will, we shall do this or that" (1), to have our minds ingulfed and swallowed up, not of the stream of time, but of the ocean of eternity; to be easily taken off from any purpose, the scene whereof must be laid on this earth, or lower world; to have our hearts more entirely and more strongly set upon God, so as to be able to say, "Whom have I in heaven or earth besides thee?" that the true end may be gain, though such a comfort be lost, and the particular offending cause cannot be found.

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(1) Jam. iv. 15.

We may err, in thinking some such particular offence must be fastened upon. If it clearly can, it ought: if not, it is better forbear judging than misjudge. Possibly, chastening for a particular sin may not be in God's design: it is not always. We may be sure it never is his principal design in taking away one relative from another. He made all things (principally) for himself: he made us but secondarily for one another. If his principal design in making such a creature was not to please me, his principal design in taking it away was not to displease or afflict me. He hath his own greater and higher end concerning his own creature, to glorify himself upon it, and by it, in a greater world than this. Many afflictions are for trial; and that in such a case is an awful thought.

The jealous God hath me now under trial, how I can bear, how I can submit, how I can reverence his hand, how I can behave myself towards him when he afflicts; whether I will venture to contend with him, or be sullen and morose towards him, because he hath bereaved me of a child I delighted in; whether I better loved him or my child. The trial may be manifold; of my faith, of my patience, of my fear of him, of my love to him: and I may add, it may be intended for a trial of gratitude, and a mighty trial that is. We are required, in every thing to give thanks. And Job did it, and said, "Blessed be the name of the Lord," when with all his substance, he took away all his children at once: "The Lord hath given, the Lord hath taken." The injunction, "in every thing give thanks," signifies there is in every thing some matter of praise. I know not so immediately what was in this case; but if there was what I have heard, great indications of early piety; if there were grounds to hope there was a work of regeneration wrought, there is infinitely more matter of thanksgiving than complaint. What had the life of a child been worth without this? When better never to have been born! It is a far greater thing if he have taken her as his own child, than if he had left her to you, only as yours. If you have faith to look into the unseen world, and behold her taken into the society of angels, and of the spirits of just men made perfect, how much more hath God done for her and you, than if he had left her to your care and provision in this wretched world? We are told there is joy in heaven for the conversion of a sinner; much more for the glorification of a convert! That joy ought to swallow up in very great part your sorrow. The good Lord frame your spirit suitably to these things, in whom I am

Your truly respectful servant,
(Very sensible of your case,)
J. Howe.

LETTER CXCV.

REV. MATTHEW HENRY to MRS. SAVAGE, on the death of his sister.

MY DEAR SISTER, Chester, Sept. 8, 1697.

I find it very easy to say a great deal to aggravate our loss; and losers think they may have leave to speak. I can say that I have lost, not only a sister, but a true friend; one of my "helpers in Christ Jesus;" and one that was to me, "as my own soul." To lose such an one in the midst of her days, at such a time as this, when so many decline, what shall I say to it? I endeavour to *silence* myself with this, that the Lord hath done it, who gives not account of any of his matters, and in whose hands we and all our comforts are, "as the clay in the hand of the potter."

But there is something more for us to *satisfy* ourselves with. The cloud has a bright side as well as a dark one. If we look upon this providence as sent to fetch a dear friend home to heaven, and to help us forward in our way thither, the thing hath quite another aspect. Are we not born from heaven, and bound to heaven? Is not that our home, our country? And are our relations any the less ours for being removed thither? And how long do we expect to stay behind? We knew not the other day that it was so little a while and we should not see her; and, alas! now it is but a little while, and we shall see her, because we "go to the Father."

There is a matter for praise and thanksgiving, even in this sad providence: that we had such a relation: that we had her so long; and had so much comfort in her; that she did shine so illustriously in gifts and graces; that she was enabled to finish well; and had, as she said, "hope in her death." She blessed God for the Scriptures which were her cordial, and did not seem to be under any cloud as to her comforts. That she hath left a good name behind her. She dies as much lamented as I think, any woman in Chester, since I knew it; for "her hands and lips fed many." That she hath left children behind her, who we hope may live to glorify God in this world, and that we do not "sorrow as those who have no hope." I shall want her converse, and you her correspondence; but let us both converse and correspond the more with Jesus Christ, and that will help to make up the want; nay, that will be "far better."

Good Mr. Lawrence hath helped us well to improve the providence. The Lord help us with grace sufficient. A letter from our friend in heaven is better than one from the best friend we have on earth. The Lord perfect what concerns you. Let us learn to sing both of mercy and judgment; and to sing to God of both, till we come to sing of mercy *only* in the world of everlasting mercy. Our dear love to you and the children.

I rest,
Your affectionate brother,
M. H.

LETTER CXCVI.

REV. NATHANIEL HEYWOOD to a FRIEND, on the death of his wife.

DEAR BROTHER,

I hear that it hath pleased God to remove from you the desire of your eyes, and my dear friend. I am heartily sorry for that sore breach in your family, and desire to suffer with you in the loss of your loving and good wife, now gone before, (according to the method and order He hath appointed, whose understanding is infinite,) whither you are shortly to follow. He that made yesterday to go before this day, and the former generation in birth and life to have been before this generation, and hath made some flowers grow, so to die and wither in *May*, and others in *June*, cannot be challenged in the order he observes with us, that one must bury another. You know who said, "I was dumb and opened not my mouth, because thou, Lord, didst it." All things are ordered in wisdom and judgment by your Father; at whose feet your own soul and your heaven lieth, and so the days of your wife. You had her as long as your lease lasted, and seeing her term was come, and your lease run out, you can no more justly quarrel with the great Sovereign for taking his own at his just term-day, than a poor farmer can complain that his master takes a portion of his own land to himself when his lease is expired; and is not he an ill debtor who payeth that which he hath borrowed with a grudge? Certainly the long loan of such a good wife, an heir of grace, and member of Christ, (as I verily believe,) deserveth more thanks at the creditor's hands, than that you should grieve and murmur when He craveth but his own. I believe you would judge them to be but unthankful neighbours who would pay you a sum of money after this manner. I know you would be sorry either to be, or to be esteemed any thing like an atheist; and yet not I, but the apostle (¹) thinks those to be hopeless atheists, who mourn excessively for the dead. But this not a challenge on my part; some jealousy I have, lest you be overmuch grieved for the loss of such a meet-help; but you have reason to rejoice, that when a part of you is on earth, another part of you is glorified in heaven, sleeping in the bosom of the Almighty: follow her, but envy her not. For indeed it is self-love in us that maketh us mourn for them that die in the Lord; because for them we cannot mourn, since they are never happy till they be dead, therefore we mourn for our own private respect. Take heed then, that in pretending your affection in mourning for your wife, you act not out of self-affection; consider what the Lord is doing in it; she is plucked out of the fire, and resteth from her labours; and the Lord in that is trying you, and casting you into the fire, behold-

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(¹) Thessalonians, iv. 13.

ing your faith and patience, and delighting to see you in the burning bush and not consumed; but sending Satan away frustrate of his design. The Lord is laying in the two scales of the balance, your making conscience of submission to his gracious will; and in the other, your affection to your wife: which of the two will you then choose to satisfy? I wish you may come out of the Lord's school wiser and more experienced in the ways of God. It is our happiness that when Christ openeth a vein, he taketh nothing but ill blood from his sick patients; and when he puts them into the furnace of affliction, and stands by the melting of the metal, he takes away the tin and lead and scum that remained in nature. But it is a sad thing when the rod is cursed, that never fruit shall grow on it; and except Christ's dew fall down on his summer sunshine, and his grace follow afflictions to make them bring forth fruit unto God, they are so bewithered to us, that our evil ground (rank and fat enough for briers) casteth up a crop of noisome weeds. I am persuaded your losses, cares, and sicknesses are but summer showers, that will wet your garments for an hour or two, and the Sun of the New Jerusalem shall quickly dry your wet coat, especially since the rain of affliction cannot stain the image of God, nor cause grace to cast its colour. Oh! learn heavenly wisdom, self-denial and mortification, by this sad loss. I know it is not for nothing (except you deny God to be wise in all that he doth) that you have lost one in the earth: it may be there hath been too little of your heart and love in heaven; and therefore the jealousy of Christ hath done this; it is a mercy that He contendeth with you, and your lovers; it may be he hath either been out of his place, or in a place inferior to his worth. O let Christ have the room of your wife; she hath now no need of you, or your love; she enjoyeth as much of the love of Christ, as her heart can be capable of. I know it is a dear-bought experience to teach you to undervalue the creature; yet it is not too dear if Christ think so. Let me entreat you to consider one thing more, (which hath helped me in such like cases more than once,) and I have done: you are hasting after your wife, and shall shortly be with her; it is but a little while, a few days longer, and you must follow her into eternity. By her death take occasion to love the world less, out of which she is taken, and heaven more, whither she is gone before you, and where you shall for ever enjoy her, and be with Christ, which is best of all. If the place she has left were any other but a prison of sin, and the home she is gone to, were any other but a palace of glory, your grief would be the more rational. But, I hope, your faith of the resurrection of the dead in Christ to glory and immortality, will lead you to dry up your tears, and suspend your longing for her till the morning of that day, when the archangel shall descend with a shout, to gather all his prisoners out of their graves up to himself in heaven.——Dear love to, and fervent prayers for you and your children. I am, your affectionate and sympathizing friend,

NATH. HEYWOOD.

LETTER CXCVII.

DR. WATTS to the REV. SAMUEL ROSEWELL, then very near death.

Lime Street, 7th April, 1722.

DEAR BROTHER ROSEWELL,

Your most agreeable and divine conversation two days ago, so sweetly overpowered my spirits, and the most affectionate expressions which you so plentifully bestowed on me, awakened in me so many pleasing sensations, that I viewed a borderer on the heavenly world, when I saw you on the confines of heaven, and conversed with you there. Yet I can hardly forbear to ask for your stay on earth, and wish your service in the sanctuary, after you have been so much within view of the glorious invisibilities which the gospel reveals to us. But if that hope fail, yet our better expectations can never fail us. Our anchor enters within the veil, where Jesus our forerunner is gone to take our places:(1) may your pains decrease, or your divine joys overpower them! May you never lose sight of the blessed world, and of Jesus the Lord of it, till the storm is passed, and you are

(1) Heb. vi.

safely arrived. And may the same grace prepare me for the same mansions, and give you the pleasure of welcoming to those bright regions,

Your affectionate and unworthy friend
and brother,
I. WATTS.

LETTER CXCVIII.

DR. WATTS to MRS. ROSEWELL, (¹) on the death of her husband.

MADAM, Lime Street, May 24, 1722.

When nature has vented itself a little, and poured out its first sorrows, it is proper then to apply the means of consolation. The skilful surgeon will let a fresh wound bleed a little before he binds it up, and thereby prevents inward disorders, and makes surer work in healing it up. Your griefs have had their loose, and the floods have almost overwhelmed you. It is time now, madam, to stop the current, and raise your head above the waves. It is time to fix your thoughts on all the cheerful and supporting circumstances that attend a mournful providence. My dear brother Rosewell was a zealous servant of Christ in his church on earth, and he has called him to a better and nobler service in heaven. Behold him as living on high, and forget him in his dying agonies.

(¹) This lady was the daughter of Richard Barrett, Esq. and survived her husband until the year 1762, when she died at Hackney, aged 75.

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"Old things," with him, "are past away: behold all things are become new!" He is where he long wished to be, and we hope to meet him there when our race is finished. O that we may be as ready to go, and long after that state, with the same warm affections! But you are left mourning here, a sorrowful widow in the midst of helpless children. Well, *the Father of the fatherless* is a kind title which God has assumed for their sakes; and he is the *husband and judge* of the widow. Faith can realize such words as these, and turn them into food and cordials in a sinking and fainting hour. Nor is there a want which you can complain of, nor a sorrow which you can feel, but there is a blessed word of supply and comfort to answer it in the book of God. May the blessed Spirit lead you to that living spring of consolation, and give you a divine relish of those waters of life. It was a pleasurable sympathy of pain that I felt in my last visit to my dying brother Rosewell. I mourned to see so useful a man so near to the grave of silence. But the pleasures with which I received the grasp of his friendly hand, and his assurances of his meeting me at the right hand of Christ, wrought a sort of mixture of passions within me, and I wept at once for sorrow and joy. Good man! How he reviewed the foundations of his hope! and searched and felt them, as it were, on all sides, to see that they were strong and divine! And which of us shall ever arrive safe at heaven, if *he* could miss the way? Which of us can raise a juster and firmer expectation? View him, then, madam, in his Father's house, in the gardens of paradise, waiting for your ascent thither, and for the company of those young plants(¹) which he left behind, till they shall grow into trees of righteousness, and are fit to be transplanted into the same garden of God on high. May the dews of heaven fall hourly on the stock and branches; and may you all be kept under the providential and gracious care of his God and your God in this dangerous wilderness, till he shall call you to his more immediate presence.

Yours in the bonds of the gospel,
I. WATTS.

LETTER CXCIX.

DR. DODDRIDGE to THOMAS MITCHELL, on the death of his mother.

DEAR TOMMY, Burton, Jan. 7, 1725.

Your father has engaged me to undertake a very ungrateful office, and makes me the messenger of some sad and melancholy news, which he had not the resolution himself to tell you. And I am concerned how I may open the mournful scene upon you in such a manner as may be least shocking and surprising.

(¹) Mr. Rosewell left two children; one of them, Mrs. Susannah Girte, was living at Hackney in 1802.

Before you go on any further, lift up your heart to God! and beg that he would strengthen and support you, that it may not overwhelm your spirit to learn that your dear and happy mother is now an angel in heaven.

I am not now forbidding you to mourn for the death of this excellent mother. God forbid! humanity and nature require it, and therefore divine grace cannot forbid it. Only I would entreat you to take care that you do not sorrow as one that has no hope; but rather set yourself seriously to consider those things which may cheer and support you, instead of only those which aggravate your trouble. It cannot, my friend, but be a great advantage to you to think, now your mother is no more, that you did your duty to her while she was yet alive. I have had it from her own mouth, and have often observed it myself, that you were one of the most dutiful and obliging children in the world. You were so at Kibworth, and since you have been at Stamford, she never heard from you but with pleasure and thankfulness; indeed that manly religious letter which you have written to your father since her illness was a cordial to her upon her dying bed. And should you not rejoice in this? Again, it should be a comfort to you to think that your dear mother is now with God in glory. Look over those delightful descriptions of the future happiness, which you may find in the Bible and in other good books, and then think, all this does she now enjoy, and something unspeakably more than this; and then you will see that love and duty require you to rejoice in her happiness, at least as much as you mourned for her affliction. Above all let it be a consolation to you to think that the separation between you and your dear mother will not be eternal. No; you are now left behind her in the world, but it is only for a few years, and then you must follow her to the grave, and I would hope follow her to heaven too. I bless God, my dear friend, I have observed a spirit of serious religion in you, far beyond what is commonly to be found in persons of your age. So that I do really believe you may look forward to the world of eternal glory with a well-grounded hope that you have an interest there. Well, when you are arrived at those happy realms, you will meet with your mother again; and, oh, upon what advantageous terms you will meet her! not as you would have met her here, had she lived till your return, it may be mourning under some bitter affliction, at least encompassed with the vanity of a mortal life; to have conversed with her, for a few days, and then to have been separated from her again: but you will then meet her in the perfection and felicity of a glorified saint, never, never to part any more. And does not this hope revive your very heart? Consider it is not the invention of a friend to mitigate your sorrow, but upon the supposition of your piety and hers, of which I would entertain no doubt, it is as certain as the gospel of the blessed Jesus itself. What if you had stood by your poor mother's bed-side, and seen her under all the pains and agonies of that dreadful distemper; and after many sighs and complaints you had beheld her fall into a gentle sleep, would it have been an affliction to you that you lost her company for a few hours, when you hoped she would quickly have awaked again, and found the benefit arising from that refreshment of nature, and by it have been enabled to converse with you with more cheerfulness than she had done before? Why, believe it, death is but a sleep. And when by faith we take in the whole duration of an immortal soul, there is not near the proportion between the remainder of your life, be it ever so long, and the eternity which you hope to spend with her, as between an hour of sleep and the remainder of your life.

I am, dear Tommy,
Your sincerely affectionate friend and servant,
PHILIP DODDRIDGE.

LETTER CC.

REV. J. BARKER (an aged minister) to DR. DODDRIDGE, at the commencement of his last illness. (1)

August 5, 1751.

Leesingham, Neal, and Barker are too nearly interested in that precious life, which now appears in danger of being cut off in the midst of its days, to hear of its waste and languishment without great concern and fervent prayer to God. How your letter affected my heart in public your friends are witness; but what I felt for my dear brother, and the ministers and churches of Christ, God and myself only know.

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(1) "Dr. Doddridge," says Mr. Stedman, "was at Shrewsbury for the benefit of air, exercise, and an entire recess from business and company, when he received this letter; and Mr. Orton tells us, that he was so affected, and melted into tears of gratitude and joy, with the friendship expressed in it, and the divine consolations which it administered, that he was apprehensive his tender frame would have sunk under the emotion."

I will not now say, Why did you not spare yourself a little sooner? I will rather heartily thank you, that you use all the means you can, to repair your frame, and restore and prolong your usefulness. It is the kindest thing you can do, and the highest instance of friendship you can now show us; and I acknowledge your goodness to us in this point with tears of joy. Consent and choose to stay with us a while longer, my dear friend, if it please God. This is not only needful to Northampton, and its adjacent towns and villages, but desirable to us all, and beneficial to our whole interest. Stay, Doddridge, oh, stay, and strengthen our hands, whose shadows grow long. Fifty is but the height of vigour, usefulness, and honour. Do not take leave abruptly. Providence hath not yet directed thee on whom to drop thy mantle. Who shall instruct our youth, fill our vacant churches, animate our associations, and diffuse a spirit of piety, moderation, candour, and charity through our villages and churches, and a spirit of prayer and supplication into our towns and cities, when thou art removed from us? especially, who shall unfold the sacred oracles, teach us the meaning and use of our Bibles, rescue us from the bond-age of systems, party-opinions, empty, useless speculations, and fashionable forms and phrases, and point out the simple, intelligible, consistent religion of our Lord and Saviour? who shall—but I am silenced by the voice of him who says, "Shall I not do what I will with my own?—Is it not my prerogative to take and leave, as seemeth me good? —I demand the liberty of disposing of my own servants at my own pleasure. He hath laboured more abundantly. His times are in my hand. He hath not slept as do others. He hath risen to nobler heights than things below. He hopes to inherit glory. He hath laboured for that which endureth to eternal life; labour, which the more it abounds, the more it exalts and magnifies, and the more effectually answers and secures its end.—It is yours to wait and trust, mine to dispose and govern.—On me be the care of ministers and of churches.—With me is the residue of the Spirit.—Both the vineyard and the labourers are mine.—I set them to work, and, when I please, I call them and give them their hire." With these thoughts my passions subside, my mind is softened and satisfied:—I resign thee, myself, and all, to God, saying, "Thy will be done!"

But now for the wings of faith and contemplation. Let me take thy hand, my dear brother, and walk a turn or two in yonder spacious regions. Yes, it is so: we read it in the book of God, that word of truth and gospel of our salvation, "that as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive." The one ruined his posterity by sin, the other raised his seed to immortality! The first poisoned the dart and inflamed the wound of death; but Jesus Christ redeemed us from this captivity. See, thou Christian minister, thou friend of my bosom and faithful servant of God, see the important period, when the surprising signs and descending inhabitants of heaven proclaim the second coming of our divine Saviour! the heavens open and disclose his radiant glory.—Hear the awakening trump. See, the dead in Christ arise glorious and immortal; —leave corruption, weakness, and dishonour behind them, and behold their Lord, and head, seated on his throne of judgment, attended and surrounded with the ministers of his power, and shining in all the fulness of celestial glory;—and not only see, but share his victory, and partake of his image and influence. And behold the demolished fabric reared again, stately, illustrious, and permanent, to demonstrate how entirely death is vanquished, its ruins repaired, and what was once meat for worms become the companion of angels: for when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal immortality, every eye will be fastened on the mighty Conqueror, and every voice and harp be tuned for that transporting song, "Oh, death, where is thy sting? Oh, grave, where is thy victory?" Yes, Doddridge, it is so. The fruit of our Redeemer's sufferings and victory is the entire, the eternal destruction of sin and death. And is it not a glorious destruction? a blessed ruin? No enemy so formidable, no tyranny so bitter, no fetters so heavy and galling, no prison so dark and dismal, but they are vanquished and disarmed; the unerring dart is blunted and broken, the prison pulled down, and our Lord is risen as the first fruits of them that slept!

How glad should I be to hear that God is pleased to prolong your life on earth to declare these glorious truths, and teach us to improve them! In this your friends, with you and many more in every place, join, and make it their common petition to the Great Disposer of all events. Use every means you can for the recovery of your health, for the sake of your friends, among whom is

Your faithful and affectionate
J. Barker.

LETTER CCI.

Duchess Dowager of Somerset to Mrs. ——, in affliction.—Advice recommended and enforced by example.

1754.

I am sorry, good Mrs. ——, to find that your illness seems rather to increase than diminish; yet the disposition of mind with which you receive this painful dispensation seems to convert your sufferings into a blessing. While you resign to the will of God in so patient a manner, this disease seems only the chastisement of a wise and merciful Being, who chasteneth not for his own pleasure, but for your profit. Were I not convinced of this great truth, I fear I must long since have sunk under the burden of sorrow, which God saw fit to wean my foolish heart from this vain world, and show me how little all the grandeur and riches of it avail to happiness. He gave me a son,(¹) who promised all that the fondest wishes of the fondest parents could hope: an honour to his family, an ornament to his country; with a heart early attached to all the duties of religion and society, with the advantage of strong and uninterrupted health, joined to a form, which, when he came into Italy, made him more generally known by the name of the "English Angel" than by that of his family. I know this account may look like a mother's fondness; perhaps it was too much so once; but, alas! it now only serves to show the uncertainty and frailty of all human dependence. This justly beloved child was snatched from us before we could hear of his illness: that fatal disease, the small-pox, seized him at Bologna, and carried him off the evening of his birth-day, on which he had completed nineteen years. Two posts before, I had a letter from him, written with all the life and innocent cheerfulness inherent to his nature; the next but one came from his afflicted governor,(²) to acquaint his unhappy father that he had lost the most dutiful and best of sons, the pride and hope of his declining age. He bore the stroke like a wise man and a Christian, but never forgot nor ceased to sigh for it. A long series of pain and infirmity, which were daily

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(¹) Lord Viscount Beauchamp.

(²) Mr. (afterwards Dr.) Dalton.

gaining ground, showed me the sword which appeared suspended over my head by an almost cobweb-thread long before it dropped. (¹) As to my bodily pains, I bless God, they are by no means insupportable at present; I rather suffer a languid state of weakness, which wastes my flesh and consumes my spirits by a gentle decay, than any frightful suffering; and am spending those remains of nature which were almost exhausted in continual care and anxiety for the sufferings of a person dearer to me than myself. My daughter, who is very good to me, has sent me her youngest son, just turned of four years old, to amuse me in my solitude, because he is a great favourite of mine, and shows a great deal of his uncle's disposition, and some faint likeness of his person. It is high time to release you from so long a letter; but there are some subjects on which my tears and pen know not how to stop when they begin to flow.

I am, dear madam, yours, &c.

LETTER CCII.

President Jonathan Edwards to Lady Peperell.

Madam, Nov. 28th, 1751. Stockbridge.

When I was at your house in Kittery, the last spring, among other instances of your kind and

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(¹) Algernon, Duke of Somerset, died Feb. 7th, 1750.

condescending treatment to me, was this, that, when I had some conversation with Sir William, concerning Stockbridge and the affairs of the Indians, and he generously offered me any assistance, in the business of my mission here, which his acquaintance and correspondence in London enabled him to afford me, and proposed my writing to him on our affairs; you were also pleased to invite me to write to you at the same time. If I should neglect to do as you then proposed, I should fail not only of discharging my duty, but of doing myself a great honour. But as I am well assured, even from the small acquaintance I had with you, that a letter of mere compliments would not be agreeable to a lady of your disposition and feelings, especially under your present melancholy circumstances; so the writing of such a letter is very far from my intention or inclination.

When I saw the evidences of your deep sorrow, under the awful frown of Heaven, in the death of your only son, it made an impression on my mind not easily forgotten; and when you spoke of my writing to you, I soon determined what should be the subject of my letter. It was that which appeared to me to be the most proper subject of contemplation for one in your circumstances; that, which I thought, above all others, would furnish you a proper and sufficient source of consolation under your heavy affliction; and this was the Lord Jesus Christ:—particularly the amiableness of his character, which rendered him worthy that we should love him, and take him for our only portion, our rest, hope, and joy; and his great and unparalleled love towards us. And I have been of the same mind ever since; being determined, if God favoured me with an opportunity to write to your ladyship, that those things should be the subject of my letter. For what other subject is so well calculated to prove a balm to the wounded spirit?

. . . . . .

We see then, dear madam, how rich and how adequate is the provision, which God has made for our consolation, in all our afflictions, in giving us a Redeemer of such glory, and such love; especially, when it is considered, what were the ends of this great manifestation of glory and love in his death. He suffered, that we might be delivered. His soul was exceeding sorrowful, even unto death, to take away the sting of sorrow, and to impart everlasting consolation. He was oppressed and afflicted, that we might be supported. He was overwhelmed in the darkness of death, that we might have the light of life. He was cast into the furnace of God's wrath, that we might drink of the rivers of his pleasures. His soul was overwhelmed with a flood of sorrow, that our hearts might be overwhelmed with a flood of eternal joy.

We may also well remember, in what circumstances our Redeemer now is. He was dead; but he is alive, and he lives for evermore. Death may deprive us of our friends here, but it cannot deprive us of this our best Friend. We have this best of friends, this mighty Redeemer to go to, in all our afflictions; and he is not one who cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; He has suffered far greater sorrows than we have ever suffered; and if we are actually united to him, the union can never be broken, but will continue when we die, and when heaven and earth are dissolved. Therefore, in this we may be confident, though the earth be removed, in him we shall triumph with everlasting joy. Now, when storms and tempests arise, we may resort to him, who is a hiding-place from the storm, and a covert from the tempest. When we thirst we may come to Him, who is as rivers of waters in a dry place. When we are weary, we may go to him, who is as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land. Having found him, who "is as the apple-tree among the trees of the wood," we may sit under his shadow with great delight, and his fruit will be sweet to our taste. Christ said to his disciples, "In the world ye shall have tribulation; but in me ye shall have peace." If we are united to him, we shall be like a tree planted by the waters, and that spreadeth out its roots by the rivers, that shall not see when heat cometh; but its leaf shall ever be green, and it shall not be careful in the year of drought, neither shall it cease from yielding fruit. He will now be our light in darkness; our morning star, shining as the sure harbinger of approaching day. In a little time he will arise on our souls, as the sun in his glory; and our sun shall no more go down, and there shall be no interposing cloud—no veil on his face, or on our hearts; but the Lord shall be our everlasting light, and our Redeemer our glory.

That this glorious Redeemer would manifest his glory and love to your mind, and apply what little I have said on this subject to your consolation, in all your afflictions, and abundantly reward your kindness and generosity to me while I was at Kittery, is the fervent prayer, madam, of

Your ladyship's most obliged and affectionate
friend and most humble servant,
JONATHAN EDWARDS.

LETTER CCIII.

BISHOP HORNE to MISS ——, on the sudden death of her father.

MY DEAR MADAM, Canterbury, Nov. 11th.

Little did I think a letter from * * * would afflict my soul; but yours received this morning has indeed done it. Seeing your hand, and a black seal, my mind foreboded what had happened. I made an attempt to read it to my wife and daughters, but—it would not do—I got no further than the first sentence, burst into a flood of tears, and was obliged to retreat into the solitude of my study, unfit for any thing, but to think on what had happened; then to fall upon my knees, and pray, that God would evermore pour down his choicest blessings on the children of my departed friend, and as their "father and their mother had forsaken them," that He would "take them up," and support them in time and eternity. Even so! Amen.

You ask comfort of me, but your truly excellent letter has suggested comfort to me, from all the proper topics; and I can only reflect it back to you again. All things considered, the circumstance which first marked the disorder may be termed a *gracious* dispensation. It at once rendered the event, one may say, *desirable*, which otherwise carried so much terror and sorrow in the face of it. Nothing else in the world could so soon and so effectually have blunted the edge of the approaching calamity, and reconciled to it minds full of the tenderest love and affection. To complete the consolation, *that* only remained, which we all know to be the fact; Mr. —— stood always so prepared, so firm in his faith, so constant in his Christian practice of every duty, that he could not be taken by surprise, or off his guard: the stroke must be to himself a blessing, whenever, or however it came. His death was as his birth-day; and, like the primitive Christians, we should keep it as such, as a day of joy and triumph. Bury his body, but embalm his example, and let it diffuse his fragrance among you from generation to genetion: call him blessed, and endeavour to be like him—like him in piety, in charity, in friendship, in courteousness, in temper, in conduct, in word and in deed. His virtues compose a little volume, which your brother should carry in his bosom; and he will need no other, if that be well studied, to make him the gentleman and the Christian. You, my dear madam, will, I am sure, go on with diligence to finish the fair transcript you have begun, that the world around you may see and admire.

Do not apologize for writing; but let me hear what you do, and what plan of life your brother thinks of pursuing. With kindest compliments from the sympathizing folks here, believe me, ever, my dear madam, your faithful friend and servant.

LETTER CCIV.

Dr. Johnson to **Mr. Elphinstone**, on the loss of his mother.

Dear Sir, Sept. 25, 1750.

You have, as I find by every kind of evidence, lost an excellent mother, and I hope you will not think me incapable of partaking of your grief. I have a mother now eighty-two years of age, whom therefore I must soon lose, unless it please God that she rather should mourn for me. I read the letters in which you relate your mother's death to Mr. Strahan; and think I do myself honour when I tell you that I read them with tears; but tears are neither to me nor to you of any further use, when once the tribute of nature has been paid. The business of life summons us away from useless grief, and call us to the exercise of those virtues of which we are lamenting our deprivation. The greatest benefit which one friend can confer upon another, is to guard and incite, and elevate his virtues. This your mother will still perform, if you diligently preserve the memory of her life, and of her death; a life, so far as I can learn, useful, wise, and innocent; and a death resigned, peaceful, and holy. I cannot forbear to mention, that neither reason nor revelation denies you to hope that you may increase her happiness by obeying her precepts; and that she may, in her present state, look with pleasure upon every act of virtue to which her instructions or example have contributed. Whether this be more than a pleasing dream, or a just opinion of separate spirits, is indeed of no great importance to us, when we consider ourselves as acting under the eye of God; yet surely there is something pleasing in the belief, that our separation from those whom we love is merely corporeal; and it may be a great incitement to virtuous friendship, if it can be made probable, that that union which has received the divine approbation, shall continue to eternity.

There is one expedient by which you may, in some degree, continue her presence. If you write down minutely what you remember of her from your earliest years, you will read it with great pleasure, and receive from it many hints of soothing recollection, when time shall remove her yet further from you, and your grief shall be matured to veneration. To this, however painful for the present, I cannot but advise you, as to a source of comfort and satisfaction in the time to come; for all comfort and all satisfaction is sincerely wished you by dear, Sir,

Your most obliged
S. J.

LETTER CCV.

Dr. Johnson to **Mr. Elphinstone**, on the loss of a near relation.

Sir, July 27, 1778.

Having myself suffered what you are now suffering, I well know the weight of your distress, how much need you have of comfort, and how little comfort can be given, A loss, such as yours, lacerates the mind, and breaks the whole system of purposes and hopes. It leaves a dismal vacuity in life, which affords nothing on which the affections can fix, or to which endeavour may be directed. All this I have known; and it is now, in the vicissitude of things, your turn to know to it.

But, in the condition of mortal beings, one must lose another. What would be the wretchedness of life, if there was not something always in view, and something immutable and unfailing, to whose mercy man may have recourse?

Τον πρωτον κινȣντα ακινητον.

Here we must rest. The greatest Being is the most benevolent. We must not grieve for the dead as men without hope, because we know they are in his hands. We have, indeed, not leisure to grieve long, because we are hastening to follow them. Your race and mine have been interrupted by many obstacles, but we must humbly hope for an happy end.

I am, Sir,
Your most humble Servant,
S. JOHNSON.

LETTER CCVI.

REV. JOHN NEWTON to MR. B——, who was labouring under severe pain from a tumour.

MY DEAREST SIR, Sept. 28, 1774.

I see the necessity of having, if possible, my principles at my fingers' ends, that I may apply them as occasions arise every hour. Certainly if my ability was equal to my inclination, I would remove your tumour with a word or a touch; I would exempt you instantly and constantly from every inconvenience and pain; but you are in the hands of one who could do all this and more, and who loves you infinitely better than I can do, and yet he is pleased to permit you to suffer. What is the plain inference? Certainly, that at the present juncture, he to whom all the concatenations and consequences of events are present in one view, sees it better for you to have this tumour than to be without it; for I have no more idea of a tumour rising (or any other incidental trial befalling you) without a cause, without a need-be, without a designed advantage to result from it, than I have of a mountain or pyramid rising up of its own accord in the middle of Salisbury Plain. The promise is express, and literally true, that all things, universally and without exception, shall work together for good to them that love God. But they work together—the smallest as well as the greatest events have their place and use—like the several stones in the arch of a bridge, where no one would singly be useful, but every one in its place is necessary to the structure and support of the arch;—or rather like the movement of a watch, where though there is an evident subordination of parts, and some pieces have a greater comparative importance than others, yet the smallest pieces have their place and use, and are so far equally important, that the whole design of the machine would be obstructed for want of them. Some dispensations and turns of Divine Providence may be compared to the main-spring or capital wheels which have a more visible, sensible, and determining influence upon the whole tenor of our lives; but the more ordinary occurences of every day are at least pins and pivots, adjusted, timed, and suited with equal accuracy, by the hand of the same great artist who planned and executes the whole; and we are sometimes surprised to see how much more depends and turns upon them than we were aware of. Then we admire his skill, and say he has done all things well. Indeed, with respect to his works of providence, as well as of creation, he well deserves the title of *Maximus in minimis.* Such thoughts as these, when I am enabled to realise them, in some measure reconcile me to what he allots for myself or my friends, and convince me of the propriety of that expostulation, which speaks the language of love as well as authority, "Be still, and know that I am God." I sympathise with you in your trial, and pray and trust that your shepherd will be your physician; will superintend and bless the use of means; will give you in his good time health and cure, and at all times reveal unto you abundance of peace. His promises and power are necessary for our preservation in the smoother scenes he has allotted for us, and they are likewise sufficient for the roughest. We are always equally in danger in ourselves, and always equally safe under the shadow of his wings. No storms, assaults, sieges, or pestilences can hurt us, till we have filled up his appointed measure of service; and when our work is done, and he has ripened us for glory, it is no great matter by what means he is pleased to call us home to himself.

I have only room to present our joint and sincerest respects. The Lord bless you all.

I am, &c.

LETTER CCVII.

Bishop Horne to W—— S——, on the loss of a near relative.

We are all much affected by the melancholy tidings communicated in your letter. They are, indeed, such as I have expected to hear some time; but when they came, it seems as if we had never expected them in earnest; and yet, when the first feelings are over, we cannot be concerned for the person departed, but for ourselves only. Her sufferings were long and heavy; and, therefore, we cannot in reality be sorry to find she is released from them. For many years she was in the furnace, and it was more than usually heated. Melted down at length and purged from dross, she is formed anew, a vessel for the heavenly temple, and does not now wish that she had suffered less in the day of trial and probation. Let us copy her patience and resignation which were truly exemplary, and prepare to follow in God's good time. Having paid the tribute of grief that is due, let us return with fresh vigour to the duties of life, and prepare to answer those calls which our faith and our country, our church and our king, will shortly, I think, make upon us all.

George Horne.

LETTER CCVIII.

W. COWPER, ESQ., to MRS. COWPER, on the death of her husband.

MY DEAR COUSIN, Olney, August 31, 1769.

A letter from your brother Frederic brought me yesterday the most afflicting intelligence that has reached me these many years. I pray to God to comfort you, and to enable you to sustain this heavy stroke with that resignation to his will, which none but himself can give, and which he gives to none but his own children. How blessed and happy is your lot, my dear friend, beyond the common lot of the greater part of mankind; that you know what it is to draw near to God in prayer, and are acquainted with a throne of grace! You have resourses in the infinite love of a dear Redeemer, which are withheld from millions; and the promises of God, which are yea and amen in Jesus, are sufficient to answer all your necessities, and to sweeten the bitterest cup which your heavenly Father will ever put into your hand. May he now give you liberty to drink at these wells of salvation, till you are filled with consolation and peace in the midst of trouble! He has said, when thou passest through the fire I will be with thee, and when through the floods, they shall not overflow thee. You have need of such a word as this, and he knows your need of it, and the time of necessity is the time when he will be sure to appear in behalf of those who trust in him. I bear you and yours upon my heart before him night and day, for I never expect to hear of distress which shall call upon me with a louder voice to pray for the sufferer. I know the Lord hears me for myself, vile and sinful as I am, and believe and am sure that he will hear me for you also. He is the friend of the widow, and the father of the fatherless, even God in his holy habitation; in all our afflictions he is afflicted, and chastens us in mercy. Surely he will sanctify this dispensation to you, do you great and everlasting good by it, make the world appear like dust and vanity in your sight, as it truly is, and open to your view the glories of a better country, where there shall be no more death, neither sorrow nor pain, but God shall wipe away all tears from your eyes for ever. O that comfortable word! "I have chosen thee in the furnace of affliction;" so that our very sorrows are evidences of our calling, and he chastens us, because we are his children.

My dear cousin, I commit you to the word of his grace, and to the comforts of his Holy Spirit. Your life is needful for your family; may God in mercy to them prolong it, and may he preserve you from the dangerous effects, which a stroke like this might have upon a frame so tender as yours. I grieve with you, I pray for you; could I do more, I would, but God must comfort you.

Yours, in our dear Lord Jesus,

W. C.

LETTER CCIX.

W. Cowper, Esq. to Rev. W. Unwin, on his having been unjustly aspersed by one of his critical hearers.

My dear Friend, April 2, 1781.

Fine weather, and a variety of *extraforaneous* occupations (search Johnson's dictionary for that word, and if not found there, insert it—for it saves a deal of circumlocution, and is very lawfully compounded) make it difficult (excuse the length of a parenthesis, which I did not foresee the length of when I began it, and which may perhaps a little perplex the sense of what I am writing, though, as I seldom deal in that figure of speech, I have the less need to make an apology for doing it at present) make it difficult (I say) for me to find opportunities for writing. My morning is engrossed by the garden; and in the afternoon, till I have drunk tea, I am fit for nothing. At five o'clock we walk; and when the walk is over, lassitude recommends rest, and again I become fit for nothing. The current hour therefore which (I need not tell you) is comprised in the interval between four and five, is devoted to your service, as the only one in the twenty-four which is not otherwise engaged.

I do not wonder that you have felt a great deal upon the occasion you mention in your last, especially on account of the asperity you have met with in the behaviour of your friend. Reflect, however, that as it is natural to you to have very fine feelings, it is equally natural to some other tempers, to leave those feelings entirely out of the question, and to speak to you, and to act towards you, just as they do towards the rest of mankind, without the least attention to the irritability of your system. Men of a rough and unsparing address should take great care, that they be always in the right; the justness and propriety of their sentiments and censures being the only tolerable apology that can be made for such a conduct, especially in a country where civility of behaviour is inculcated even from the cradle. But in the instance now under our contemplation I think you a sufferer under the weight of an animadversion not founded in truth, and which, consequently, you did not deserve. I account him faithful in the pulpit, who dissembles nothing that he believes, for fear of giving offence. To accommodate a discourse to the judgment and opinion of others, for the sake of pleasing them, though by doing so we are obliged to depart widely from our own, is to be unfaithful to ourselves at least, and cannot be accounted fidelity to Him, whom we profess to serve. But there are few men who do not stand in need of the exercise of charity and forbearance; and the gentleman in question has afforded you an ample opportunity in this respect, to show how readily, though differing in your views, you can practise all that he could possibly expect from you, if your persuasion corresponded exactly with his own.

With respect to Monsieur le Curé, I think you not quite excusable for suffering such a man to give you any uneasiness at all. The grossness and injustice of his demand ought to be its own antidote. If a robber should miscal you a pitiful fellow for not carrying a purse full of gold about you, would his brutality give you any concern? I suppose not. Why then have you been distressed in the present instance?

Yours, W. C.

LETTER CCX.

WILLIAM COWPER, ESQ. to REV. JOHN NEWTON, on the death of a friend.

May 31, 1783.

We rather rejoice than mourn with you on the ocsion of Mrs. C——'s death. In the case of believers, death has lost his sting, not only with respect to those he takes away, but with respect to survivors also. Nature indeed will always suggest some causes of sorrow, when an amiable and Christian friend departs; but the Scripture, so many more, and so much more important reasons to rejoice, that on such occasions, perhaps more remarkably than on any other, sorrow is turned into joy. The law of our land is affronted if we say the king dies, and insists on it that he only demises. This, which is a fiction, where a monarch only is in question, in the case of a Christian is reality and truth. He only lays aside a body, which it is his privilege to be encumbered with no longer; and instead of dying, in that moment he begins to live. But this the world does not understand, therefore the kings of it must go on demising to the end of the chapter.

W. C.

LETTER CCXI.

William Cowper, Esq. to Joseph Hill, Esq, on the death of his mother.

My dear Friend, November, 1784.

To condole with you on the death of a mother aged eighty-seven would be absurd—rather, therefore, as is reasonable, I congratulate you on the almost singular felicity of having enjoyed the company of so amiable, and so near a relation so long. Your lot and mine in this respect have been very different, as indeed in almost every other. Your mother lived to see you rise, at least to see you comfortably established in the world. Mine, dying when I was six years old, did not live to see me sink in it. You may remember with pleasure, while you live, a blessing vouchsafed to you so long; and I, while I live, must regret a comfort of which I was deprived so early. I can truly say, that not a week passes (perhaps I might with equal veracity say a day) in which I do not think of her. Such was the impression her tenderness made upon me, though the opportunity she had for showing it was so short. But the ways of God are equal—

and when I reflect on the pangs she would have suffered, had she been a witness of all mine, I see more cause to rejoice than to mourn, that she was hidden in the grave so soon.

We have, as you say, lost a lively and sensible neighbour in Lady Austen, but we have been long accustomed to a state of retirement within one degree of solitude, and being naturally lovers of still life, can relapse into our former duality without being unhappy at the change. To me indeed a third is not necessary, while I can have the companion I have had these twenty years.

W. C.

LETTER CCXII.

William Cowper, Esq. to Rev. Walter Bagot, on the loss of an accomplished wife.

Olney, Feb. 27, 1786.

Alas! alas! my dear, dear friend, may God himself comfort you! I will not be so absurd as to attempt it. By the close of your letter it should seem, that in this hour of great trial he withholds not his consolations from you. I know by experience that they are neither few nor small; and though I feel for you as I never felt for man before, yet do I sincerely rejoice in this, that whereas there is but one true comforter in the universe under afflictions such as yours, you both know him, and know where to seek him. I thought you a man the most happily mated that I had ever seen, and had great pleasure in your felicity. Pardon me, if now I feel a wish that, short as my acquaintance with her was, I had never seen her. I should have mourned with you, but not as I do now. Mrs. Unwin sympathizes with you also most sincerely, and you neither are, nor will be soon forgotten in such prayers as we can make at Olney. I will not detain you longer now, my poor afflicted friend, than to commit you to the tender mercy of God, and to bid you a sorrowful adieu!

Adieu! ever yours,
W. C.

LETTER CCXIII.

William Cowper, Esq. to Rev. John Newton, on the death of his adopted child, Miss Cunningham.

My dear Friend, Olney, Oct. 16, 1785.

To have sent a child to heaven is a great honour and a great blessing, and your feelings on such an occasion may well be such as render you rather an object of congratulation than of condolence. And were it otherwise, yet, having yourself free access to all the sources of genuine consolation, I feel that it would be little better than impertinence in me to suggest any. An escape from a life of suffering to a life of happiness and glory is such a deliverance as leaves no room for the sorrow of survivors, unless they sorrow for themselves. We cannot, indeed, lose what we love without regretting it; but a Christian is in possession of such alleviations of that regret as the world knows nothing of. Their beloveds, when they die, go they know not whither; and if they suppose them, as they generally do, in a state of happiness, they have yet but an indifferent prospect of joining them in that state hereafter. But it is not so with you; you both know whither your beloved is gone' and you know that you shall follow her, and you know also that, in the meantime, she is incomparably happier than yourself. So far, therefore, as she is concerned, nothing has come to pass but what was most fervently to be wished. I do not know that I am singularly selfish; but one of the first thoughts that your account of Miss Cunningham's dying moments and departure suggested to me had self for its object. It struck me that she was not born when I sank into darkness, and that she is gone to heaven before I have emerged again. "What a lot," said I to myself, "is mine! whose helmet is fallen from my head, and whose sword from my hand, in the midst of the battle; who was stricken down to the earth when I least expected it; who had just begun to cry victory! when I was defeated myself; and who have been trampled upon so long, that others have had time to conquer and to receive their crown, before I have been able to make one successful effort to escape from under the feet of my enemies." It seemed to me, therefore, that if you mourned for Miss Cunningham, you gave those tears to her to which I only had a right, and I was almost ready to exclaim, "I am the dead, and not she: you misplace your sorrows." I have sent you the history of my mind on this subject without any disguise; if it does not please you, pardon it at least, for it is the truth. The unhappy, I believe, are always selfish. I have, I confess, my comfortable moments; but they are like the morning dew, so suddenly do they pass away and are gone.

. . . . . .

I have nothing to add, but that we are all well, and remember you with much affection; and that I am, my dear friend,

Sincerely yours,
W. C.

LETTER CCXIV.

William Cowper, Esq. to Rev. John Newton, on the death of his wife.

My dear Friend, Weston, Jan. 20, 1791.

Had you been a man of this world, I should have held myself bound by the law of ceremonies to have sent you long since my tribute of condolence. I have sincerely mourned with you; and though you have lost a wife, and I only a friend, yet do I understand too well the value of such a friend as Mrs. Newton, not to have sympathized with you very nearly. But you are not a man of this world; neither can you, who have both the Scripture and the Giver of Scripture to console you, have any need of aid from others, or expect it from such spiritual imbecility as mine. I considered, likewise, that receiving a letter from Mrs. Unwin, you, in fact, received one from myself, with this difference only,—that hers could not fail to be better adapted to the occasion and to your own frame of mind, than any that I could send you.

. . . . . .

LETTER CCXV.

William Cowper, Esq. to the Rev. John Newton, on the same subject.

My dear Friend, Weston, June, 24, 1791.

Considering the multiplicity of your engagements, and the importance, no doubt, of most of them, I am bound to set the higher value on your letter, and instead of grumbling that they come seldom, to be thankful to you that they come at all. You are now going into the country, where, I presume, you will have less to do, and I am rid of Homer. Let us try therefore, if, in the interval between the present hour and the next busy season, (for I, too, if I live, shall probably be occupied again,) we can continue to exchange letters more frequently than for some time past.

You do justice to me and Mrs. Unwin, when you assure yourself that to hear of your health will give us pleasure: I know not, in truth, whose health and well-being could give us more. The years that we have seen together will never be out of our remembrance; and, so long as we remember them, we must remember you with affection. In the pulpit and out of the pulpit, you have laboured in every possible way to serve us; and we must have a short memory indeed for the kindness of a friend, could we by any means become forgetful of yours. It would grieve me more than it does to hear you complain of the effects of time, were not I also myself the subject of them. While he is wearing you and other dear friends of mine, he spares not me; for which I ought to account myself obliged to him, since I should otherwise be in danger of surviving all that I have ever loved—the most melancholy lot that can befal a mortal. God knows what will be my doom hereafter; but precious as life necessarily seems to a mind doubtful of its future happiness, I love not the world, I trust, so much as to wish a place in it when all my beloved shall have left it.

You speak of your late loss in a manner that affected me much; and when I read that part of your letter, I mourned with you and for you. But surely, I said to myself, no man had ever less reason to charge his conduct to a wife with anything blame-worthy. Thoughts of that complexion, however, are no doubt extremely natural on the occasion of such a loss; and a man seems not to have valued sufficiently, when he possesses it no longer, what, while he possessed it, he valued more than life. I am mistaken too, or you can recollect a time when you had fears, and such as became a Christian, of loving too much; and it is likely that you have even prayed to be preserved from doing so. I suggest this to you as a plea against those self-accusations, which I am satisfied you do not deserve, and as an effectual answer to them all. You may do well too to consider, that had the deceased been the survivor, she would have charged herself in the same manner, and I am sure you will acknowledge, without any sufficient reason. The truth is, that you both loved, at least as much as you ought; and I dare say, had not a friend in the world who did not frequently observe it. To love just enough, and not a bit too much, is not for creatures who can do nothing well. If we fail in duties less arduous, how should we succeed in this, the most arduous of all?

I am glad to learn from yourself that you are about to quit a scene that probably keeps your tender recollections too much alive. Another place and other company may have their uses; and, while your church is undergoing repair, its minister may be repaired also.

I remain, sincerely yours,

W. C.

LETTER CCXVI.

Rev. Robert Hall to B. Gurney, Esq., on the death of Mrs. Gurney.

My dear Friend, Bristol, August 25, 1827.

It is a very few days since I heard the very melancholy intelligence of the removal of dear Mrs. Gurney; and I was not willing to obtrude on the sacred privacy of grief, till its first agitation was in some measure subsided. Most *deeply* is this stroke felt, and long will continue to be so, by that very large circle of which she was the ornament and delight; but how much more severe the stroke on him who was united to her by the tenderest of earthly ties! To me the information was like a thunderclap: it was so sudden, and so unexpected, that I could scarcely persuade myself it was a reality; it seems now like one of those frightful visions of the night which vanish at the return of dawn.

Alas! how fresh in my mind is the figure of the dear deceased, presiding in the social circle with that inimitable ease, elegance, and grace which captivated every heart:—changed now, and clouded for ever with the shades of death! Never was a victim snatched by the great destroyer more beloved or more lamented.

But why should I dwell on what is so distressing to remember, rather than advert to the brighter side of this melancholy picture? You, my dear friend, have lost the richest of earthly blessings in a most admirable and amiable wife; but grace has completed its triumph in adding to the celestial choir one more spirit of the " just made perfect." Bright as she shone in her earthly sphere, her light was dim and obscure, compared to that which now invests her. Her pure and celestial spirit has ascended to its native seat, where she " bears the name of her God on her forehead, and serves him day and night in his temple. Your loss, my dear friend, is her unspeakable gain; and your mind is too generous, in your calmest moments, to wish her hurled from her celestial elevation. Let a few more months and years revolve, and you will be reunited to part no more; the days of your mourning will be ended; the Lord will be to you (as he is already to the dear deceased) " your everlasting light, and your God your glory."

I hope you will not suffer the excess of grief so to absorb your mind as to shut out the consolations of piety, or the claims of duty. It is my earnest prayer, that God himself may comfort you, and that he may be pleased so to sanctify this most heavy trial, that though " faint," you may be, " still pursuing;" and that, though you " sow in tears," you may " reap in joy."

I beg to be most affectionately remembered to every branch of your family, as well as to all enquiring friends; and remain, with deep concern,

Your affectionate and sympathizing friend,

ROBERT HALL.

LETTER CCXVII.

Rev. Robert Hall to Mrs. Langdon, on the death of her husband.

My dear Madam, Leicester, Oct. 23, 1824.

The melancholy intelligence of the death of dear Mr. Langdon has deeply affected me; and most happy should I deem myself, were it in my power to administer effectual consolation under such a stroke. I refrained from addressing you immediately, waiting for the first transports of grief to subside; because I well know, that premature attempts to console only irritate the sorrows they are meant to heal. Let me indulge the hope, that by this time reason and religion are come to your aid, and that you are prepared to say, with the greatest and most illustrious of sufferers, "Even so, Father; for so it seemeth good in thy sight."

The remarkable combination of the most lovely qualities with the most fervent piety, which distinguished the character of our dear friend, while they enhance the sense of your loss, will, I hope, mitigate its bitterness in another view, by assuring you, that "great is his reward in heaven." Death to him is, undoubtedly, "exceeding great gain;" nor would you, in your best moments, wish to draw him down from his elevated abode, to this vale of sorrow and affliction. The stroke was not entirely sudden and unexpected: a long series of attacks and infirmities must, no doubt, have contributed to familiarize your mind to the event. Remember, my dear madam, that the separation is but for a season: our dear friend is not lost, but preferred to an infinitely higher state, where he is awaiting your arrival. To me, his removal will long be a source of deep regret; for where shall I find a friend equally amiable, tender and constant?

. . . . . .

I beg to be most affectionately remembered to each of your dear children, earnestly praying that their father's God may be their God. Wishing and praying that you may be favoured with the richest consolations of religion,

I remain, my dearest madam,
Your affectionate friend,
ROBERT HALL.

LETTER CCXVIII.

REV. ROBERT HALL to MR. J. E. RYLAND, on the death of his father.

. . . . . .

It gives me much pleasure, but no surprise, to hear that the end of your dear father was emphatically peace. What else, or what less, could be expected from such a life? As he was one of the brightest examples of holiness on earth, no doubt great is his reward in heaven. May it be your happiness, my dear sir, and mine, to follow, though at an humble distance, so bright a pattern. May we not be slothful, but followers of them who, through faith and patience, inherit the promises. I need not repeat how much I feel for your dear mother, and the whole bereaved family. It is, indeed, an irreparable loss; but such is the term of all earthly bliss. May we be enabled to lay hold on eternal life!

LETTER CCXIX.

REV. ROBERT HALL to MR. HEWITT FYSH, on the death of Mrs. Fysh.

MY DEAR FRIEND, Shelford, March 11, 1804.

I deeply sympathize with you in the great loss you have sustained by the decease of your most excellent wife. It is a stroke which will be long felt by all her surviving friends; how much more by a person with whom she was so long and so happily united! There are many considerations, however, which must occur to your mind in alleviation of your distress. The dear deceased had long been rendered incapable, by the severity of her affliction, of enjoying life; and a further extension of it would have been but a prolongation of woe. Much as her friends must regret her loss, to have been eagerly solicitous for her continuance here, would have been a refined selfishness, rather than true friendship. She was spared for the kindest purposes; to exemplify the power of religion, in producing a cheerful resignation to the will of God, through a long series of suffering, to a degree which I never saw equalled in any other instance. *There was the faith and patience of the saints.* Her graces were most severely tried, and surely never did any shine brighter. The most active and zealous services in religion could not have yielded more glory to God, than the dignified composure, the unruffled tranquillity, and the unaltered sweetness she maintained amidst her trials. O, my dear friend, let the image of her virtues be ever impressed on your heart, and ever improved as an incentive to that close walk with God which laid the foundation of all her excellence. To have had an opportunity of contemplating the influence of genuine religion so intimately, and under so interesting a form, is a privilege which falls to the lot of few, and is surely one of the most inestimable advantages we can possess. That she was spared to you so long; that her patience continued unexhausted amidst so severe a pressure; and, above all, that you have so well-grounded an assurance of her happiness, must fill you with a grateful sense of the divine goodness. This state is designed to be a mingled scene, in which joy and sorrow, serenity and storms, take their turns. A perpetuity of either would be unsuitable to us. An uninterrupted series of prosperity would fill us with worldly passions. An unbroken continuity of adversity would unfit us for exertion. The spirit would fail before him, and the souls which he hath made. Pain and pleasure, scenes of satisfaction and sorrow, are admirably attempered with each other, so as to give us constant room for thankfulness, and yet to remind us that *this is not our rest.* Our dear and invaluable friend has entered into the world of perfect spirits, to which she made so near an approach during her continuance here. To a mind so refined, and exercised in the school of affliction, so resigned to the divine will, and so replete with devotion and benevolence, how easy and delightful was the transition. *To her to live was Christ, and to die was gain.* Let us improve this dispensation of Providence, by imitating her example; let us cherish her memory with reverential tenderness; and consider it as an additional call to all we have received before, to "seek the things which are above." I confess the thought of so dear a friend having left this world, makes an abatement of its value in my estimation, as I doubt not it will still more in yours. The thought of my journey to London gives me little or no pleasure: for I shall hear the accents of that voice which so naturally expressed the animation of benevolence—I shall behold that countenance which displayed so many amiable sentiments—no more. But can we wish her back? Can we wish to recall her from that blissful society which she has joined, and where she is singing a new song? No, my dear friend, you will not be so selfish: you will, I trust, aspire with greater ardour than ever after the heavenly world, and be daily imploring fresh supplies of that grace which will fit you for an everlasting union with our deceased friend. I hope her amiable nieces will profit by this expressive event. And as they have (blessed be God for it) begun "to seek after Sion, with their faces thitherward," that they will walk forward with additional firmness and alacrity. I shall make little or no stay in London on my first journey; but, as I long to see you, will spend the eleventh instant (that is, the evening preceding my engagement to preach) at your house, if agreeable. I shall be glad to see Mr. Dore, but pray do not ask strangers.

I am,
Your sympathising friend,
ROBERT HALL.

LETTER CCXX.

MRS. SUSAN HUNTINGTON, shortly after the death of her husband, to MRS. T——, of D——, who had just suffered a similar loss.

Boston, January 25, 1820.

MY DEAR FRIEND AND SISTER,

Ever since that sorrowful event which numbered me among those who can more emphatically than other classes of mourners, say, "Lover and friend hast thou put far from me, and mine acquaintance into darkness," I have felt desirous of writing to you. Not because I expected to offer any consolation to your mind, with which it is not already much better acquainted than mine, but from that natural feeling of sympathy, which is excited towards those whose trials are similar to our own. And now that I have taken up my pen, the reflection that my time might be better occupied than in obtruding myself upon you, and thus opening anew the fountains of your grief (if, indeed, they have ever been closed in any measure,) by the recital of my own sufferings, almost induces me to lay it down again. However, I do not mean to pain you, and agonize myself, in this way. Profitable as it may be for common mourners, to dwell often and long upon the circumstances of their bereavements, in order to cherish the impressions which such dispensations may have made on their hearts, it is not profitable for *us*. Such sorrow as ours is in no danger of being suddenly diverted. The danger is on the other side, of its pressing so constantly and heavily on the spirit, as to crush the feeble body to the grave. And would it not have been so with us, my dear friend, were it not that the hand of the Lord has been upon us for good?

I have wished, and still wish, to know how you do, what are your circumstances, and how your mind has been exercised under its heavy afflictions. I, you know, have had accumulated ones. But have we not both found that precious promise verified, "As thy days, so shall thy strength be?" Has the Lord ever been a "wilderness" to us? And may we not safely trust him for the future? Does he not know exactly, what measure of sorrow we can bear, as well as what kind we need?

And now, my friend, what remains for us to do in this world? Not to live for the temporal enjoyments of life, certainly; for how can any comfort be received, any delight enjoyed, which will not, as long as we live, be embittered by the recollection of those, dearer to us than our own lives, who once sympathized in all our joys, and whose sympathy with us was a principal source of our satisfaction? Yes, this bitter, bitter thought will press itself upon our remembrance, when we lie down, and when we rise up, in the house, and by the way. And, viewing our loss only in this manner, the world looks like a waste, a desert, a weary monotonous desert, stripped of all that once enlivened it. But we must not view it so. What did Christ live for? What did Paul live for? Alas! if we could find our happiness here in that in which the Saviour found his, we might yet see many good days in the land of the living. And this is what we must labour after. If we have little left us to enjoy, have we nothing left us to do? And the happiness of our souls ought to result, the happiness of a holy soul will result, from doing and being just what God pleases. The mind which feels that it has no sympathies to be exercised, no object upon which to repose its affections, no business to employ its faculties, must sink into a state of hopeless and dreadful despondency. But the Christian should never feel thus. Though our precious husbands have left us, have we nothing to feel or do for their children; nothing to do for Christ, and for the church which he hath purchased with his own blood? And may we not yet be happy in doing diligently the work which he has given us to do? My dear friend, we shall never be happy *just as* we have been. Oh, no, never. The smile of tenderness will wait for us no more when returning to our sorrowful habitations. The voice of unmingled love will greet us no more in our afflictions. The counsellors, advisers, supporters, and prophets, upon whom we leaned, who sanctioned by their influence the expressions of maternal authority, who bore us constantly and earnestly before God, are gone! Nature shudders, as she casts her eye forward, and thinks of this long, long, long separation.

But why have I suffered myself to fall into this sorrowful strain? I did it unintentionally, unconsciously. Forgive me. I have pained you, and I have pained myself. I was going to say, we must find our happiness in a different way—in girding up the loins of our mind to a more diligent performance of duty; in putting on, as good soldiers of the cross, the whole armour of God; in setting our faces as a flint against every thing which can discourage, intimidate, or wound us; in remembering the example of our devoted, our suffering Saviour, in leaning on his arm, confiding in his wisdom, and trusting in his grace and strength, and in sending forward our hearts to that happy, happy home, which we hope one day to reach, and whither our beloved friends have gone before us. Let our expectations of earthly rest be moderate, except of that sweet rest which results from simple trust in God.

I have written thus far, and have not yet mentioned what I had most in view when I began. I think we may derive benefit from remembering each other's children in our prayers. Can we not devote ten minutes every Saturday evening, at nine o'clock, to special prayer for each other, that we may have grace, wisdom, courage, and patience to do our duty; and for our children, that their affections may be sanctified, our instructions blessed, they brought into the covenant early, &c. Will you write, and let me know what you think of it? My little boy wakes, and I must bid you adieu.

LETTER CCXXI.

MRS. SUSAN HUNTINGTON to a FRIEND at Bridgewater.

MY DEAR MRS. S. Boston, Feb. 23, 1823.

I wish I was where I could look in upon you a few moments as I did last summer. Your pleasant chamber, and its lonely and sorrowful occupant are not forgotten. Lonely and sorrowful I know you must be. A summer's sun has long since dried the green sod which covers the grave of Mary, and a winter's snows have been settling on and hiding the place where she sleeps; but your tears are not dried, your grief cannot be suppressed. Alas! I know it is so; and the gloomy and desolate face of nature at this season speaks, in language which goes to your very soul, of all you have loved and have lost. Miserable indeed are human comforters. I cannot tell you not to mourn. I cannot tell you your loss is common; for where will you find another daughter, another Mary, till you meet her in heaven? She was, in a sense, your all; and she is not, for God hath taken her.

Perhaps to write in this strain is not wise. If it has given you pain, forgive me. Yet there is something in this train of thought that is pleasing. If it occasions grief, it seems like the "joy of grief." The heart sometimes loves to give itself up to a sense of its own desolation; and, while it dwells on the remembrance of what it once so tenderly loved, cherishes every fond recollection, and desires to cherish it for ever. If our friends are not here, where are they? If in all this wide world we shall never meet again, if we cast our look forward, and behold nothing but the fearful chasm we shudder to contemplate—the chasm opened by the loss of these dear ones, and opened never to be filled—is all lost? No, they are not lost, but only taken over into the world of spirits a little before us. We are on the threshold. A few more summers and winters, perhaps a few more months or days only, and we shall follow them. The great concern then is, to be faithful. We must not expect heaven here. Our great business in this world is to do and suffer all our Lord's will, as good and loyal subjects, as loving and obedient children. Rest is nowhere promised on earth. "Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life." "The presumptuous," says one, "expect great success here, and heaven hereafter."

LETTER CCXXII.

Bishop Heber to his Mother, just before his departure for the see of Calcutta.

Lincoln's Inn, Jan. 15, 1823.

My dearest Mother,

We have now nearly finished our packing, and I have quite got through my preachings, &c. Dear Emily is, of course, low at leaving her friends, but she is well. Our little darling is quite well again, and I am in as good health and spirits as I can expect to be. I think and hope I am going on God's service. I am not conscious of any unworthy or secular ends; and I hope for His blessing and protection both for myself and for those dear persons who accompany me, and whom I leave behind.

God Almighty bless and prosper you, my beloved mother. May he comfort and support your age, and teach you to seek always for comfort, where it may be found, in His health and salvation through Jesus Christ our Lord.

. . . . . .

I know we have all your prayers as you have ours. Believe me that we shall be, I hope, useful; if useful, happy where we are going; and we trust in God's good providence for bringing us again together in peace, when a few short years are ended, in this world, if He sees it good for us;—if not, yet in that world wherein there shall be no parting nor sorrow any more, but God shall wipe away all tears from all eyes, and we shall rejoin our dear father, and the precious babe(¹) whom God has called to himself before us.

REGINALD HEBER.

LETTER CCXXIII.

BISHOP HEBER to MISS STOWE, on the sudden death of her brother, Mr. Stowe.

With a heavy heart, my dear Miss Stowe, I send you the enclosed keys. How to offer you consolation in your present grief, I know not; for by my own deep sense of the loss of an excellent friend, I know how much heavier is your burden. Separation of one kind or another is, indeed, one of the most frequent trials to which affectionate hearts are exposed. And if you can only regard your brother as removed for his own advantage to a distant country, you will find, perhaps, some of

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(¹) His eldest child.

that misery alleviated under which you are now suffering. Had you remained in England when he came out hither, you would have been, for a time, divided no less effectually than you are now. The difference of hearing from him is almost all; and though you now have not that comfort, yet even without hearing from him, you may be well persuaded (which there you could not always have been) that he is well and happy; and above all, you may be persuaded, as your dear brother was most fully in his time of severest suffering, that God never smites his children in vain, or out of cruelty. His severest stripes are intended to heal, and he has doubtless some wise and gracious purpose, both for your poor Martin and for you, in thus taking him from your side, and leaving you in this world, with *Himself* as your sole guardian. Meantime, in my wife and myself, you have friends even in this remote land, who are anxious, as far as we have the power, to supply your brother's place, and whose best services you may command as freely as his whom you have lost.

. . . . . .

So long as you choose to remain with us, we will be to our power, a sister and a brother to you. And it may be worth your consideration, whether in your present state of health and spirits, a journey, in my wife's society, will not be better for you than a dreary voyage home. But this is a point on which you must decide for yourself; I would scarcely venture to advise, far less dictate, where I am only anxious to serve. In my dear

Emily you will already have had a most affectionate and sensible counsellor.

. . . . . .

And now, farewell! God support, bless, and comfort you! Such as my prayers are, you have them fervently and sincerely offered. But you have better and holier prayers than mine. That the spirits in Paradise pray for those whom they have left behind, I cannot doubt, since I cannot suppose that they cease to love us there; and your dear brother is thus still employed in your service, and still recommending you to the throne of Mercy, to the all-sufficient and promised help of that God who is the Father of the fatherless, and of that blessed Son, who hath assured us, that "they who mourn shall be comforted."

LETTER CCXXIV.

Rev. Dr. Carey, Principal of the Serampore College, to the family of his deceased friend, **Dr. Ryland.**

You must, before this, have frequently wondered that I have not written to condole with you, under your heavy affliction, and I can make no apology for the neglect, except one, which ought to have had the contrary effect. That, however, is the true reason why I have not written to you, and scarcely to any one else in England.

Ever since I have heard of the death of my very dear friend, certainly the dearest to me of any man in the world, England has appeared a blank. I recollect a few persons were known to me, and I highly esteem them. I have heard much of many who have been raised up in the church, since I left England; their names stand high in general estimation, but they are personally unknown to me, and I to them. I have two sisters living, and one of them has a large family; I love my sisters living, but still I can scarcely fix my mind on a single individual in England, to whom my heart runs voluntarily, and in whose life I live.

As it respected my late very dear brother Ryland, it was far different. He, in conjunction with my dear brethren, Fuller, Sutcliff, and Mr. Hall, senior, was the guide of my unexperienced youth, my faithful counsellor, and my staunch friend; our esteem for each other was reciprocal. He was scarcely ever forgotten in my prayers; and I believe I was scarcely ever forgotten in his. I felt a lively interest in all his joys and sorrows, so far as I knew them; and no man felt a more lively interest than he in the undertaking to which I have devoted myself. He has left the world, and is gone to glory. I hope to meet him there, and with him, "in transporting joy, recount the labours of our feet." I must mourn and struggle with difficulties some time longer, but how much longer is quite uncertain. May I persevere to the end!

LETTER CCXXV.

Rev. S. Newell to his Mother-in-law, **Mrs. Atwood**, after the death of his wife and child.

Port Louis, (Isle of France,) Dec. 10, 1812.

When I sit down to address you, my dear mother, from this distant land, to me a land of strangers and a place of exile, a thousand tender thoughts arise in my mind, and naturally suggest such inquiries as these: How is it now with that dear woman to whom I am indebted for my greatest earthly blessing—the mother of my dear Harriet? and mine too; (for I must claim the privilege of considering you as my own dear mother.) Does the candle of the Lord still shine on her tabernacle, and is the voice of joy and praise yet heard in her dwelling?—or, what is not improbable in this world of disappointment, has some new affliction, the death perhaps of a dear child, or of some other beloved friend, caused her heart again to bleed and her tears to flow? Ah! my mother, though we may live many years, and see good in them all, yet let us remember the days of darkness, for they too will be many. It is decreed by Infinite Wisdom alone, that through much tribulation we must enter into the kingdom of heaven. You, my dear mother, have had your share of adversity; and I too have had mine. But we will not complain. Sanctified afflictions are the choicest favours of Heaven. They cure us of our vain and foolish expectations from the world, and teach our thoughts and affections to ascend and fix on joys that never die. I never longed so much to see you as I have these several days past. What would I now give to sit one hour by that dear fire-side, where I have tasted the most unalloyed pleasure that earth affords, and recount to you and the dear children, the perils, the toils, and the sufferings through which I have passed since I left my native land. In this happy circle I should for a moment forget ——.

Yes, my dear friends, I would tell you how God has disappointed our favourite schemes, and blasted our hopes of preaching Christ in India, and has sent us all away from that extensive field of usefulness, with an intimation that he has nothing for us to do there, while he has suffered others to enter in and reap the harvest. I would tell how he has visited us all with sickness, and how he has afflicted me in particular by taking away the dear little babe which he gave us, the child of our prayers, of our hopes, of our tears. I would tell you—but, oh! shall I tell it or forbear?

Have courage, my mother, God will support you under this trial; though it may for a time cause your very heart to bleed. Come, then, let us mingle our griefs, and weep together; for she was dear to us both; and she too is gone. Yes, Harriet, your lovely daughter is gone, and you will see her face no more! Harriet, my own dear Harriet, the wife of my youth, and the desire of my eyes, has bid me a last farewell, and left me to mourn and weep! Yes, she is gone. I wiped the cold sweat of death from her pale, emaciated face, while we travelled together down to the entrance of the dark valley. There she took her upward flight, and I saw her ascend to the mansions of the blessed! O Harriet! Harriet! for thou wast very dear to me. Thy last sigh tore my heart asunder, and dissolved the charm which tied me to earth.

But I must hasten to give you a more particular account of the repeated afflictions with which God has visited me.

Harriet enjoyed good health from the time we left you, until we embarked on our voyage from Calcutta to the Isle of France; (excepting those slight complaints which are common to females in her situation.) During the week previous to our sailing for this place, she went through much fatigue in making numerous calls on those dear friends in Calcutta, who were anxious to see her, and who kindly furnished her with a large supply of those little things which she was soon expected to want, and which, on account of her succeeding illness, she would not have been able to prepare on the voyage. The fatigue of riding in a palanquin, in that unhealthy place, threw her into a fever, which commenced the day after we were on board. She was confined about a week to her couch, but afterward recovered, and enjoyed pretty good health. We left Calcutta on the 4th of August, but on account of contrary winds and bad weather, we were driven about in the Bay of Bengal without making much progress during the whole of that month. On or about the 27th, it was discovered that the vessel had sprung a leak; and on the 30th, the leak had increased to such an alarming degree, as to render our situation extremely perilous. A consultation of the officers was called, and it was determined to put about immediately, and make the nearest port, which was Coringa, a small town on the Coromandel coast, about sixty miles south of Vizigapatam. We got safe into port on Saturday, Sept. 5th. The vessel was found to be in very bad case.

[Mr. Newell here proceeds to give an account of the birth of his child, its death, and lastly, of the illness and death of his wife. His letter then continues as follows.]

There, my dear mother, I have finished the story of Harriet's sufferings. Let us turn from the tale of woe to a brighter scene: one that will gladden your heart, as I am sure it does mine. During this long series of sufferings, the bare recital of which must affect every feeling heart, she meekly yielded to the will of her heavenly Father, without one murmuring word. "My wicked heart," she writes, "is inclined to think it hard, that I should suffer such fatigue and hardship. I sinfully envy those whose lot it is to live in tranquillity on land. Happy people! Ye know not the toils and trials of voyagers across the rough and stormy deep. Oh for a little Indian hut on land! But hush my warring passions; it is for Jesus, who sacrificed the joys of his Father's kingdom, and expired on a cross to redeem a fallen world, that thus I wander from place to place, and feel nowhere at home. How reviving the thought! How great the consolation it yields to my sinking heart! I will cherish it, and yet be happy."

In view of those sufferings which she afterward experienced, she writes thus: "I hope to reach the place of our destination in good health. But I feel no anxiety about that. I know that God orders every thing in the best possible manner. If He so orders events, that I should suffer pain and sickness on the stormy ocean, without a female friend, exposed to the greatest inconveniences, shall I repine, and think he deals hardly with me? Oh no! Let the severest trials and disappointments fall to my lot, guilty and weak as I am, yet I think I can rejoice in the Lord, and joy in the God of my salvation."

In the first part of her sickness which succeeded the birth of our babe, she had some doubts, which occasionally interrupted her spiritual comfort; but they were soon removed, and her mind was filled with that peace of God which passed all understanding. When I asked her, a few days before she died, if she had any remaining doubts respecting her spiritual state, she answered with an emphasis, that she had none. During the whole of her sickness she talked in the most familiar manner, and with great delight, of death and the glory that was to follow. When Dr. Burke one day told her, those were gloomy thoughts, she had better get rid of them; she replied, that on the contrary they were to her cheering and joyful beyond what she could express. When I attempted to persuade her that she would recover, (which I fondly hoped,) it seemed to strike her like a disappointment. She would say, " You ought rather to pray that I may depart, that I may be perfectly free from sin, and be where God is."

Her mind was from day to day filled with the most comforting and delightful views of the character of God and Christ. She often requested me to talk to her on these interesting subjects. She told me that her thoughts were so much confused, and her mind so much weakened, by the distress of body she had suffered, that she found it difficult steadily to pursue a train of thought on divine things, but that she continually looked to God, and passively rested on him. She often spoke of meeting her friends in heaven. "Perhaps," said she, " my dear mother has gone before me to heaven, and as soon as I leave this body I shall find myself with her." At another time she said, " We often talk of meeting our friends in heaven; but what would heaven be with all our friends, if God were not there?"

. . . . . .

The last words which I remember, and which I think were the last she uttered relative to her departure, were these, "The pains, the groans, the dying strife."—" How long, O Lord, how long!"

But I must stop, for I have already exceeded the bounds of a letter, though I have come far short of doing justice to the dying deportment of this dear friend. Oh! may my last end be like hers.

. . . . . .

LETTER CCXXVI.

Rev. A. Judson to his mother-in-law, **Mrs. Hasseltine**, of Bradford, Massachusetts; communicating an account of the death of his wife, under peculiarly distressing circumstances, during his absence on an important mission to Ava, in company with the English embassy.

Dear Mother, Ava, Dec. 7, 1826.

This letter, though intended for the whole family, I address particularly to you; for it is a mother's heart that will be most deeply interested in its melancholy details. I propose to give you, at different times, some account of my great, irreparable loss, of which you will have heard before receiving this letter.

I left your daughter, my beloved wife, at Amherst, the 5th of July last, in good health, comfortably situated, happy in being out of the reach of our savage oppressors, and animated in prospect of a field of missionary labour opening under the auspices of British protection. It affords me some comfort, that she not only consented to my leaving her for the purpose of joining the present embassy to Ava, but uniformly gave her advice in favour of the measure whenever I hesitated concerning my duty. Accordingly I left her. On the fifth of July I saw her for the last time. Our parting was much less painful than many others had been. We had been preserved through so many trials and vicissitudes, that a separation of three or four months, attended with no hazards to either party, seemed a light thing. We parted, therefore, with cheerful hearts, confident of a speedy reunion, and indulging fond anticipations of future years of domestic happiness. After my return to Rangoon, and subsequent arrival at Ava, I received several letters from her, written in her usual style, and exhibiting no subject of regret or apprehension, except the declining health of our little daughter Maria. Her last was dated the 14th of September. She says, " I have this day moved into the new house, and, for the first time since we were broken up at Ava, feel myself at home. The house is large and convenient, and if you were here I should feel quite happy. The native population is increasing very fast, and things wear rather a favourable aspect. Moung Ing's school has commenced with ten scholars, and more are expected. Poor little Maria is still feeble. I sometimes hope she is getting better; then again she declines to her former weakness. When I ask her where papa is, she always starts up and points towards the sea. The servants behave very well, and I have no trouble about any thing excepting you and Maria. Pray take care of yourself, particularly as it regards the intermittent fever at Ava. May God preserve and bless you, and restore you in safety to your new and old home, is the prayer of your affectionate Ann."

On the 3rd of Oct. Captain F——, Civil Superintendant of Amherst, writes, " Mrs. Judson is extremely well. Why she did not write herself by the same opportunity, I know not." On the 18th, the same gentleman writes, "I can hardly think it right to tell you that Mrs. Judson has had an attack of fever, as before this reaches you she will, I sincerely trust, be quite well, as it has not been so severe as to reduce her. This was occasioned by too close attendance on the child. However, her cares have been rewarded in an extraordinary manner, as the poor babe, at one time, was so reduced that no rational hope could be entertained of its recovery; but at present a most favourable change has taken place, and she has improved wonderfully. Mrs. Judson had no fever last night, so that the intermission is now complete." The tenour of this letter was such as to make my mind quite easy, both as it regarded the mother and the child. My next communication was a letter with a black seal, handed me by a person, saying, he was sorry to inform me of the death of the child. I know not whether this was a mistake on his part, or kindly intended to prepare my mind for the real intelligence. I went into my room, and opened the letter with feelings of gratitude and joy, that at any rate the mother was spared. It was from Mr. B——, Assistant Superintendant of Amherst, dated the 26th of October, and began thus:

"My dear sir, to one who has suffered so much, and with such exemplary fortitude, there needs but little preface to tell a tale of distress. It were cruel indeed to torture you with doubt and suspense. To sum up the unhappy tidings in a few words—*Mrs. Judson is no more.*"

. . . . You perceive, that I have no account whatever of the state of her mind in view of death and eternity, or of her wishes concerning her darling babe, whom she loved most intensely. I hope to glean some information on these points from the physician who attended her, and the native converts who must have been occasionally present.

I will not trouble you, my dear mother, with an account of my own private feelings—the bitter, heart-rending anguish, which for some days would not admit of mitigation, and the comfort which the gospel subsequently afforded, the gospel of Jesus Christ, which brings life and immortality to light. Blessed assurance!—and let us apply it afresh to our hearts—that while I am writing and you perusing these lines, her spirit is resting and rejoicing in the heavenly paradise,

> " Where glories shine, and pleasures roll,
> That charm, delight, transport the soul;
> And every panting wish shall be
> Possess'd of boundless bliss in thee."

And there, my dear mother, we also soon shall be, uniting and participating in the felicities of heaven with her for whom we now mourn. " Amen—even so, come, Lord Jesus."

LETTER CCXXVII.

Rev. A. Judson to the same party, on the same subject.

Amherst, Feb. 4, 1827.

Amid the desolation that death has made, I take up my pen once more to address the mother of my beloved Ann. I am sitting in the house she built —in the room where she breathed her last—and at a window from which I see the tree that stands at the head of her grave, and the top of the " small rude fence," which they have put up " to protect it from incautious intrusion."

Mr. and Mrs. Wade are living in the house, having arrived here about a month after Ann's death; and Mrs. Wade has taken charge of my poor motherless Maria. I was unable to get any accounts of the child at Rangoon; and it was only on my arriving here, the 24th ult., that I learned she was still alive. Mr. Wade met me at the landing place; and as I passed on to the house, one and another of the native Christians came out, and when they saw me, they began to weep. At length we reached the house; and I almost expected to see my love coming out to meet me as usual; but no, I saw only, in the arms of Mrs. Wade, a poor little puny child, who could not recognize her weeping father, and from whose infant mind had long been erased all recollections of the mother who loved her so much.

She turned away from me in alarm, and I, obliged to seek comfort elsewhere, found my way to the grave:—but who ever obtained comfort there? Thence I went to the house in which I left her; and looked at the spot where we last knelt in prayer, and where we exchanged the parting kiss.

The doctor who attended her has removed to another station, and the only information I can obtain, is such as the native Christians are able to communicate.

It seems that her head was much affected during her last days, and she said but little. She sometimes complained thus—"The teacher is long in coming, and the new missionaries are long in coming: I must die alone, and leave my little one; but as it is the will of God, I acquiesce in his will. I am not afraid of death; but I am afraid I shall not be able to bear these pains. Tell the teacher that the disease was most violent, and I could not write; tell him how I suffered and died; tell him all that you see; and take care of the house and things until he returns." When she was unable to notice any thing else, she would still call the child to her, and charge the nurse to be kind to it, and indulge it in every thing, until its father should return. The last day or two, she lay almost senseless and motionless, on one side—her head reclining on her arm—her eyes closed—and at eight in the evening, with one exclamation of distress in the Burman language, she ceased to breathe.

Feb. 7. I have been on a visit to the physician who attended her in her illness. He has the character of a kind, attentive, and skilful practitioner;

and his communications to me have been rather consoling. I am now convinced that every thing possible was done; and that had I been present myself, I could not have essentially contributed to avert the fatal termination of the disease. The doctor was with her twice a day, and frequently spent the greater part of the night by her side. He says, that from the first attack of the fever, she was persuaded she should not recover; but that her mind was uniformly tranquil and happy in the prospect of death. She only expressed occasional regret at leaving her child, the native Christians, and the schools, before her husband or another missionary family could arrive. The last two days she was free from pain. On her attention being roused by reiterated questions, she replied, "I feel quite well, only very weak." These were her last words.

The doctor is decidedly of opinion, that the fatal termination of the fever is not to be ascribed to the localities of the new settlement, but chiefly to the weakness of her constitution, occasioned by severe privations and long-protracted sufferings which she endured at Ava. Oh, with what meekness, patience, magnanimity, and Christian fortitude, she bore those sufferings! And can I wish they had been less? Can I sacrilegiously wish to rob her crown of a single gem? Much she saw and suffered of the evil of this evil world; and eminently was she qualified to relish and enjoy the pure and holy rest into which she has entered. True, she has been taken from a sphere in which she was singularly qualified, by her natural disposition, her winning manners, her devoted zeal, and her perfect acquaintance with the language, to be extensively serviceable to the cause of Christ; true, she has been torn from her husband's bleeding heart, and from her darling babe; but infinite wisdom and love have presided, as ever, in this most afflicting dispensation. Faith decides that it is all right; and the decision of faith, eternity will soon confirm.

I have only time to add (for I am writing in great haste, with very short notice of the present opportunity of sending to Bengal) that poor little Maria, though very feeble, is, I hope, recovering from her long illness. She began indeed to recover, while under the care of the lady who kindly took charge of her at her mother's death; but when after Mr. Wade's arrival she was brought back to this house, she seemed to think that she had returned to her former home, and had found in Mrs. Wade her own mother. And certainly the most tender, affectionate care is not wanting to confirm her in this idea.

LETTER CCXXVIII.

REV. A. JUDSON to the same party, informing her of the death of his child.

DEAR MOTHER HASSELTINE, Amherst, April 26, 1827.

My sweet little Maria lies by the side of her fond mother. The complaint, to which she was subject several months, (an affection of the bowels,) proved incurable. She had the best medical advice; and the kind care of Mrs. Wade could not have been, in any respect, exceeded by that of her own mother. But all our efforts, and prayers, and tears, could not propitiate the cruel disease. The work of death went forward; and after the usual process, excruciating to a parent's feelings, she ceased to breathe, on the 24th inst. at three o'clock, P. M., aged two years and three months. We then closed her faded eyes, and bound up her discoloured lips, where the dark touch of death first appeared, and folded her little hands—the exact pattern of her mother's on her cold breast. The next morning we made her last bed, in the small enclosure which surrounds her mother's lonely grave. Together they rest in hope, under the hope tree, (Hopia,) which stands at the head of the graves; and together, I trust, their spirits are rejoicing, after a short separation of precisely six months.

Thus I am left alone in the wide world. My father's family, and all my relatives, have been, for many years, separated from me by seas that I shall never repass. They are the same to me as if buried. My own dear family I have actually buried: one in Rangoon, and two in Amherst. What remains for me, but to hold myself in readiness to follow the dear departed to that blessed world,

"Where my best friends, my kindred dwell,
Where God, my Saviour, reigns!"

LETTER CCXXIX.

REV. A. JUDSON to his SISTERS-IN-LAW, on the same subject. —The sustaining power and all-sufficient consolations of Christianity.

MY DEAR SISTERS, Maulaming, Dec. 4, 1827.

It is a most affecting thought to me, that when you were expressing your feelings for my poor motherless Maria, and requesting that she might be sent home—that very day, perhaps hour, death was laying his stiffening hand on her little emaciated form, and turning a deaf, pitiless ear to the supplications of her agonized father, and the yearning wishes of dear distant relatives. Death mocks at us, and tramples our dearest hopes and our lives in the dust. Dreadful tyrant, offspring and ally of sin ! But go on now, and do thy worst. Thy time will come. The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death. Yes, awful power, thou shalt devour thyself and die. And then my angelic Ann, and my meek blue-eyed Roger, and my tender-hearted, affectionate darling Maria,—my venerable father, you, my dear sisters, that still remain, our still surviving parents, and I hope, myself, though all unworthy, shall be rescued from the power of death and the grave ; and when the crown of life is set on our heads, and we know assuredly that we shall die no more, we shall make heaven's arches ring with songs of praise to him who hath loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood.

It is also an affecting thought, that when sister M. was writing hers of the 24th of October, 1826, —that very day, perhaps hour, the object of her sisterly love was just becoming incapable of reciprocating the affectionate salutation. Her head was reclining on her arm. She was thinking, I doubt not, of her absent husband, her distant parents and sisters; and, above all, of her poor sickly orphan child, whose plaintive cries she could no more hush. And she thought, I doubt not, of her Saviour, and the heavenly glory that was just opening to her view. But on all these subjects a cloud of darkness must ever rest, till dispelled by the light of heaven. All my questioning of the people who were about her dying bed, has been able to elicit no other particulars besides those which I have already communicated.

You ask many questions in A.'s letter of March 23, about our sufferings at Ava: but how can I answer them now? There would be some pleasure in reviewing those scenes, if she were alive; but now I cannot. The only pleasant reflection—the only one that assuages the anguish of retrospection —is, that she now rests far away, where no spotted-faced executioner can fill her heart with terror; where no unfeeling magistrate can extort the scanty pittance which she had preserved through every risk, to sustain her fettered husband and famishing babe; no more exposed to lie on a bed of languishment, and stung with the uncertainty, what would become of her poor husband and child when she was gone. No, she has her little ones around her, I trust, and has taught them to praise the source whence their deliverance flowed. Yes, her little son, his soul enlarged to angel's size, was perhaps the first to meet her at heaven's portals, and welcome his mother to his own abode. And her daughter followed her in six short months. Had she remained, it seems to me impossible to have complied with your request, and sent her far from me over the seas.

How happy should I be to find myself once more in the bosom of the family in Bradford, and tell you ten thousand things that I cannot put on paper. But this will never be. Nor is it of much consequence. A few more rolling suns, and you will hear of my death, or I of yours. Till then, believe me your most affectionate brother. And when we meet in heaven—when all have arrived, and we find all safe, for ever safe, and our Saviour ever safe and glorious, and in him all his beloved—oh, shall we not be happy, and ever praise Him who has endured the cross to wear and confer such a crown!

PART V.

LETTERS OF CHRISTIAN AFFECTION AND FRIENDSHIP.

PART V.

LETTERS OF CHRISTIAN AFFECTION AND FRIENDSHIP.

LETTER CCXXX.

Bishop Latimer, from his prison at Oxford, to Mrs. Wilkinson, of London, who had been exceedingly charitable to him and many other martyrs, in their sufferings.

If the gift of a pot of cold water shall not be in oblivion with God, how can God forget your manifold and bountiful gifts, when he shall say to you, " I was in prison and you visited me?" May God grant us all to do and suffer while we are here, as may be to his will and pleasure.

Yours in Bocardo,
Hugh Latimer.

LETTER CCXXXI.

William Tyndal, the translator of the Bible, to John Frith.

Brother Jacob,

Beloved in my heart, there lives not in whom I have so good hope and trust, and in whom mine heart rejoices and my soul comforts herself, as in you;—not the thousandth part so much for your learning, and what other gifts else you have, as that you will creep low by the ground, and walk in those things which the conscience may feel, and not in the imaginations of the brain; in fear, and not in boldness; in open necessary things, and not to pronounce or define of hid secrets, or things that neither help nor hinder, whether they be so or no; in unity, and not in seditious opinions. Insomuch, that if you be sure you know; yet in things that may abide leisure, you will defer, or say, till others agree with you, "Methinks the text requires this sense or understanding;" yea and that if you be sure that your part be good, and another hold the contrary, yet if it be a thing that makes no matter, you will laugh and let it pass, and refer the thing to other men, and stick you stiffly and stubbornly only in earnest and necessary things. And I trust you are persuaded even so of me. For I call God to record, against the day we shall appear before our Lord Jesus, to give a reckoning of our doings, that I never altered one syllable of God's word against my conscience; nor would this day, if all that is in the earth, whether it be pleasure, honour, or riches, might be given me. Moreover, I take God to record to my conscience, that I desire of God to myself in this world, no more than that without which I cannot keep his laws.

Finally, if there were in me any gift that could help at hand, and aid you if need required, I promise you I would not be far off, and would commit the end to God: my soul is not faint, though my body be weary. But God hath made me evil favoured in this world, and without grace in the sight of men, speechless and rude, dull and slow-witted; your part shall be to supply that which lacketh in me, remembering, that as lowliness of heart shall make you high with God, even so meekness of words shall make you sink into the hearts of men. Nature gives age authority, but meekness is the glory of youth, and gives them honour. Abundance of love makes me exceed in babbling.

Sir, as concerning purgatory, and many other things, if you be demanded, you may say, if you err, the spirituality hath so led you, and that they have taught you to believe as you do. For they preached to you all such things out of God's word, and alleged a thousand texts, by reason of which texts, you believed as they taught you. But now you find them liars, and that the texts mean no such things, and therefore you can believe them no longer, but are as you were, before they taught you, and believe no such thing; howbeit, you are ready to believe, if they have any other way to prove it, for without proof you cannot believe them, when you have found them with so many lies. If you perceive wherein we may help, either in being still, or doing somewhat, let us have word, and I will do mine uttermost.

My Lord of London hath a servant called John Tisen, with a red beard, and a black reddish head, and was once my scholar. He was seen in Antwerp, but came not among the Englishmen; whether he is gone a secret ambassador, I wot not.

The mighty God of Jacob be with you to supplant his enemies, and give you the favour of Joseph; and the wisdom and spirit of Stephen be with your heart and with your mouth, and teach your lips what they shall say, and how to answer to all things. He is our God if we despair in ourselves, and trust in him: this is the glory, Amen.

I hope our redemption is nigh

WILLIAM TYNDAL.

LETTER CCXXXII.

JEREMY TAYLOR to JOHN EVELYN, ESQ.

DEAR SIR, July 19, 1656.

I perceive the greatness of your affections by your diligence to enquire after and to make use of any opportunity which is offered, whereby you may oblige me. Truly, sir, I do continue in my desires to settle about London, and am only hindered by my *res angusta domi;* but hope in God's goodness that he will create to me such advantages as may make it possible; and when I am there, I shall expect the daily issues of the Divine Providence to make all things else well; because I am much persuaded that, by my abode in the vicinage of London, I may receive advantages of society and books to enable me better to serve God and the interest of souls. I have no other design but it; and I hope God will second it with his blessing.

. . . . . .

Dear sir, I am in some little disorder by reason of the death of a little child of mine, a boy that lately made us very glad: but now he rejoices in his little orb, while we think, and sigh, and long to be as safe as he is. Sir, when your Lucretius (¹) comes into my hands, I shall be able to give you a better account of it. In the meantime I pray for blessings to you and your dear and excellent lady; and am,

Dear Sir,
Your most affectionate and endeared friend and
Servant,
JEREMY TAYLOR.

LETTER CCXXXIII.

JEREMY TAYLOR to JOHN EVELYN, ESQ.—A grateful heart.

HONOURED AND DEAR SIR, May 15, 1657.

A stranger came two nights since from you with a letter, and a token; full of humanity and sweetness that was, and this of charity. I know it is more blessed to give than to receive; and yet as I no ways repine at the Providence that forces me to receive, so neither can I envy that felicity of yours,

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(¹) Evelyn had been lately employed in translating that poet.

not only that you can, but that you do give; and as I rejoice in that mercy which daily makes decrees in heaven for my support and comfort, so I do most thankfully adore the goodness of God to you, whom he consigns to greater glories by the ministries of these graces. But, sir, what am I, or what can I do, or what have I done, that you think I have or can oblige you? Sir, you are too kind to me; and oblige me not only beyond my merit, but beyond my modesty. I only can love you, and honour you, and pray for you: and in all this I cannot say but that I am behindhand with you, for I have found so great effluxes of all your worthiness and charities, that I am a debtor for your prayers, for the comfort of your letters, for the charity of your hand, and the affections of your heart. Sir, though you are beyond the reach of my returns, and my services are very short of touching you, the obeying of which might signify my great regards of you, I could with some more confidence converse with a person so obliging, but I am obliged and ashamed, and unable to say so much as I should do to represent myself to be,

Honoured and dear Sir,
Your most affectionate
And obliged friend and servant,
JEREMY TAYLOR.

LETTER CCXXXIV.

John Evelyn, Esq., of Says-court, to S. Pepys, Esq.

Wotton, Aug. 9, 1700.

The confirmation of your health under your own hand, and that I still live in your esteem, revives me. There could nothing come more welcome to me: it brings me the tenderest instances of your friendship, and what I shall ever value,—your counsel. Indeed, I am not a little sensible that more thought, and less motion or stirring than usual, had been safer for me since I came hither. And though at present the indisposition under which I laboured be much abated, yet the apprehension of its return makes me take hold of your kindness in offering me the receipt of the barley-water, and the method of preparing it. Meantime, be assured, I am not without those serious reflections you so Christianly suggest. The scantiness, mutability and little satisfaction of the things of this world, after all our researches in quest of something we think worth our pains, but are indeed the images only of what we pursue, warn me, (so much nearer my period,) that my sand runs lower than yours, that there is another and a better state of things which concerns us, and for which I pray God Almighty to prepare us both. Epictetus (¹) has an excellent and useful illustra-

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(¹) Enchirid. cap. xii.

tion in order to this readiness. "When the master of the vessel," says he, "calls on board the passengers he set on shore to refresh a little, they should continually be mindful of the ship, and the master's summons; and leave their trifling and gathering cockle-shells, nay, all impertinencies whatsoever, mind the signal, and run to the ship. The warning is in general; but if thou be a man in years, stray not too far, lest thou be left behind, and lose thy passage." This alarm, friend, is constantly in my thoughts, intent upon finishing a thousand impertinencies, which I fancy would render my habitation, my library, garden, collections, and the work I am about, complete; *at si gubernator vocaverit ad navem,* we must leave them all. Thus the philosophers; but we have better advice from the divine oracles, to be upon our watch and within call. Such was that, you know, which always sounded in St. Jerome's ears; "*Surgite mortui et venite ad judicium,*" and this gives check and alloy to all the imaginary satisfactions we think to find in the things of this life. Let you and I, therefore, settle our necessary affairs, and pray we may not be surprised: an easy, comfortable passage is that which remains for us to beg of God, and for the rest to sit loose to things below. I have, I thank God, made my will since I came here, and look upon all other accessions with indifference; and though I bait now and then upon an innocent diversion, and am not idle as to other improvements: *inutilis olim, ne videar vixisse;* let us both be ready to leave them when the Master calls. And with this meditation, by you so seasonably inculcated to your old friend, I return the most humble thanks of,

Sir,
Your most obliged and faithful friend,
J. EVELYN.

LETTER CCXXXV.

PHILIP HENRY to REV. FRANCIS TALLENTS.

Bor. May, 14, 1694.

DEAR AND HONOURED BROTHER,

I should have answered your last sooner, but wanted opportunity of sending it. I rejoice in the continuance of your mercies, that your "bow doth yet abide in strength," and that my dear sister is also spared to you in her usefulness. The Lord's most holy name be blessed and praised for it! It seems you have your *mixtures*(1) for exercise. God will have you yet to shine brighter; the dishclouts that he makes use of must help to do it; theirs the shame, yours the honour. *Qui volens detrahit famæ tuæ, nolens volens addit mercedi tuæ.* It is a sign we gallop in our way, when the dogs follow us barking. Slack not your pace, though they do so. There will as certainly be a resurrection of names, as of bodies, and both with advantage: both as the sun at noon-day. I know not when I shall be so happy as to see you at Salop, though I much desire it. I am like a traveller's horse that knows its stages, which if he exceed, he tires, and is the worse for it. Hither, once a quarter, is my *non plus ultra.* I have not been at Chester, though I have many loadstones there, above these thirteen months.

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(1) That is, different kinds of *discipline*. It appears from the striking, though coarse expression which follows, that his correspondent had been exposed to the slanders of some unprincipled persons.

Once a week, and sometimes twice, I keep my circuit of two miles, or four miles, each Wednesday; by which time I am recovered from my Sabbath weariness; and by the time I am recovered from that, the Sabbath-work returns again; so that I am never *not* weary. But why do I tell you this? —That I may boast what a labourer I am? I am a loiterer, a trifler, a slug. *Magnis conatibus nihil ago.* It is that you may know wherein to help me with your prayers. Beg for me, that I may be found faithful and that while "I preach to others, I myself may not be a cast-away." I have some hope, through grace, that I shall not; but the heart is deceitful, the devil is busy, and God is just and holy. Only this I trust to,—"Christ hath died, yea, rather is risen again."

Dear love and service to you both. The Lord himself be your everlasting portion.

This from your affectionate, obliged brother,
friend, servant in our dear Lord,
P. H.

LETTER CCXXXVI.

HON. ROBERT BOYLE to his Sister, the COUNTESS OF RANELAGH.

Bath, August 2nd, 1649, late at night.

MY SISTER,

I have ever counted it amongst the highest infelicities of friendship, that it increasingly reflects upon us our imparted griefs; for if our friends appear unconcerned in them, that indifference offends us, and if they resent them, sympathy afflicts us. This consideration, concurring with my native disposition, has made me shy of disclosing my afflictions, where I could not expect their redress; being too proud to seek a relief in the being thought to need it, and too good a friend to find a satisfaction in their griefs I love, or to remit of the ill-natured consolation of seeing others wretched as well as I. This humour may in part inform you of the cause of my silence, and, I hope, in part excuse it; but I am not now at leisure to make apologies, though I will assure you I decline the employment for want of time, not justice. Since I wrote to you last, I was unlikely enough ever to be in a condition to write to you again; and my danger was so sudden and unexpected, that nothing could transcend it except theirs, whose dilatory conversion makes them trust eternity to the uncertain improvement of a future contingent minute of a life obnoxious to numerous casualties, as impossible (almost) to be numbered as avoided. What God has decreed of me, himself knows best; for my part, I shall still pray for a perfect resignation to his blessed will, and a resembling acquiescence in it, and I hope his Spirit will so conform me to his dispensations, that I may cheerfully, by his assignment, either continue my work, or ascend to receive my wages. And in this I must implore the assistance of your fervent prayers, dear sister, which I am confident will both find a shorter way to heaven, and be better welcomed there.

. . . . . .

The melancholy which some have been pleased to misrepresent to you as the cause of my distemper, is certainly much more the effect of them: neither is it either of that quality or that degree you apprehend, but much more just than dangerous: yet, to obey you, I shall endeavour a divorce; and, as the properest means, endeavour to wait upon you; in order to which, I came this night in a litter to this town, whence I intend not to dislodge till God's blessing upon the remedies enable me to do it on horseback. The kindness you expressed in the letter I received this morning, has brought me so high a consolation that I should think it cheaply purchased by the occasion of it, if I had ignored that the sole want of suitable opportunities restrained the frequency of resembling strains; and if I were not too well acquainted with the greatness of your goodness, not to derive a higher joy from your obliging proffers, as they are effects of your friendship, than testimonies of it. But though I value the blessing of your company at the rate of having the happiness of more than an indifferent acquaintance with you, I cannot consent to purchase my felicity (if such a thing could be done) by your disquiet: for your remove will not more certainly discompose your family, than it will be useless or unnecessary to me; the nature of my disease being such, that it will either frustrate your visit, or allow me to do so; for if in a very short time it destroy not, it will leave me strength enough to fetch a perfect cure of it at London, whither, in spite of my present distempers, which are not small, nor (I fear) very fugitive, the physicians would persuade me that, by God's assistance, I may be able to crawl in a short time. I shall beseech you therefore not to stir, until you hear further from me or of me; and to believe, that though your visits are favours of too precious a quality to be fully receivable from your intention only, yet my concern in your quiet will make me (in the purposed journey) more welcomely resent your design than your presence. I hope you will pardon the disorder of this scribble to that of the writer, who is not only weary of his journey, but is at present troubled with a fit of his ague, which yet being but a sickness, cannot impair an affection, which will be sure to keep me really and unalterably till death, my dearest, dearest, dearest sister, your most affectionate brother and humble servant,

R. B.

Hon. Robert Boyle to his Sister, the Countess of Ranelagh.

LETTER CCXXXVII.

My Sister, Stalb. Aug. the last, 1649.

I must confess that I should be as much in debt for your letters, though I had answered every one of yours, as he is in his creditor's who for two angels has paid back but two shillings; for certainly, if anywhere, it is in the ductions of the mind, that the quality ought to measure extent, and assign number and equity to multiply excellency, where wit has contracted it. I could easily evince this truth, and the justness of the application too, did I not apprehend that your modesty would make you mind me, that the nature of my disease forbids all strains. I am here, God be praised, upon the mending hand, though not yet exempted from either pain or fears; the latter of which I could wish (but believe not) as much enemies to my reason, as I find the former to my quiet. I intend notwithstanding, by God's blessing, as soon as I have recruited and refreshed my purse and self, to accomplish my designed removal to London: my hoped arrival at which I look on with more joy, as a fruit of my recovery than a testimony of it. Sir William and his son went hence this morning, having by the favour (or rather charity) of a visit, made me some compensation for the many I have lately received from persons, whose visitations (I think I may call them) in spite of my averseness to physic, make me find a greater trouble in the congratulations, than in the instruments of my recovery. You will pardon, perhaps, the bitterness of this expression, when I have told you, that having spent most of this week] in drawing (for my particular use) a quintessence of wormwood, those disturbers of my work might easily shake some few drops into my ink. I will not now presume to entertain you with those moral speculations, with which my chemical practices have entertained me; but if this last sickness had not diverted me, I had before this presented you with a discourse (which my vanity made me hope would not have displeased you) of the theological use of natural philosophy; endeavouring to make the contemplation of the creatures contributory to the instruction of the prince and to the glory of the author of them. But my blood has so thickened my ink, that I cannot yet make it run; and my thoughts of improving the creatures have been very much displaced by those of leaving them. Nor has my disease been more guilty of my oblivion, than my employment since it has begun to release me; for Vulcan has so transported and bewitched me, that as the delights I taste in it make me fancy my laboratory a kind of Elysium, so as if the threshold of it possessed the quality the poets ascribed to that Lethe their fictions made men taste of before their entrance into those seats of bliss, I there forget my standish and my books, and almost all things, but the unchangeable resolution I have made of continuing till death, sister,

Your

R. B.

LETTER CCXXXVIII.

John Eliot, the missionary to the North American Indians, to the **Right Hon. Robert Boyle**, acknowledging his munificence to the Indian Mission.

Roxburg, Nov. 27, 1683.

Although my hasty venturing to begin the impression of the Old Testament before I had your honour's *fiat* may have moved (as some intimate) some disgust, yet I see that your love, bounty, and charity doth still breathe out encouragement unto the work, by supplies of £460 unto the work; for which I do return my humble thankfulness to your honour, and take boldness to entreat favour for two requests.

First, I pray, that you would please to attempt an apology for my haste. I am deep in years, and sundry say, if I do not procure it printed while I live, it is not within the prospect of human reason, whether ever, or when, or how it may be accomplished. It is Christ's work, and for the good of souls, which is my charge to attend and run adventures to accomplish, especially when divine Providence brought into my hand some small encouragement to begin. But if this apology be short, (though capable of much enlargement,) yet then, my second humble request is, that you would please to draw a curtain of love over all my failures, because love will cover a multitude of transgressions. The work goeth on now with more comfort, though we have had many impediments, partly by sickness of the workmen, for it is a very sickly and mortal time with us, as also the rigour of the winter doth now obstruct us. The work goeth on, I praise God: the sabbath is sanctified in many places, and they have still fragments of their old Bibles, which they make constant use of.

Your honour's, to serve you in our Lord Jesus,
JOHN ELIOT.

LETTER CCXXXIX.

SIR THOMAS BROWNE to MRS. LYTTLETON. Religious reflections on an ordinary occurrence happily and unaffectedly introduced.

DEAR BETTY, Sept. 15, 1681.

Though it were no wonder this very tempestuous and stormy winter, yet I am sorry you had such an uncomfortable sight as to behold a ship cast away so near you; this is no strange, though unwelcome sight at Yarmouth, Cromer, Winterton, and sea towns. Though you could not save them, I hope they were the better for your prayers, both those that perished and those that escaped. Some wear away in calms, some are carried away in storms: we come into the world one way, there are many gates to go out of it. God give us grace to fit and prepare ourselves for that necessity, and to be ready to leave all when and howsoever he shall call. The prayers of health are most like to be acceptable: sickness may choke our devotions, and we are accepted rather by our life than by our death. We have a rule how to lead the one, the other is uncertain, and may come in a moment. God, I hope, will spare you to serve him long, who didst begin early to serve him.

. . . . . .

I rest, your loving father,
Thomas Browne.

LETTER CCXL.

Archbishop Secker to Dr. Watts.

Sir, Cuddesden, Sept. 14, 1743.

I heartily thank you for your obliging letter, and, had I known that you had printed a sermon on the subject, (1) I should not have failed to enrich my own from it. I hope the things I have said in favour of our charity schools are true. I hope the Christians of this nation in general are grown much milder towards each other; and I am sure we have great need to gain in this virtue what we lose in others, and become a more united body, as we become a smaller, which I apprehend we do. But, fear not, little flock! May God direct and bless us all in our poor endeavours to serve him! May he give you every needful support under your long sickness, and restore you speedily to your former usefulness, if it be His holy will!

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(1) Dr. Watts's Essay towards the encouragement of charity schools.

I am, with great esteem, Sir,

Your, &c.

LETTER CCXLI.

DR. JOSIAH HORT, archbishop of Tuam, to DR. WATTS.

REV. SIR, Dublin, Dec. 15, 1743.

I am brought into the circumstance of an insolvent debtor, who is afraid to see the face of his creditor; and yet it is not through idleness or disregard that I remain so long in my friend's debt for his kind letter of the last summer; but I am really oppressed with letter-writing, and business of various kinds; some of my own, but more of other persons; some private, but more public, both ecclesiastical and secular, which are incident to my station.

However, I have at last found a spare hour for thanking you for the present of your book, which ought more properly to be done by my wife, who presently laid hands upon it, and took it into her own library. She is much taken with the vein of piety which breathes in your works, and buys them up.

I am truly concerned for your *insomnia,* which I suppose proceeds from weak nerves. If you could ride an easy pad, increasing your journey every day from one to four or five miles, as your strength would permit, I should hope for some good effect, as the lassitude occasioned by that exercise would incline you more naturally to rest than the use of drugs.

I bless God, I enjoy good health, which enables me to go through much business; but I have, for many years, been going down the hill; and, if the doctrine of gravitation takes place in the life of man, the motion must accelerate as I come nearer the bottom. Your case is the same, though more aggravated by distempers. God grant we may be useful while we live; and may run clear, and with unclouded minds, till we come to the very dregs.

I send you my visitation charge to my clergy of Tuam. The former part is a copy of my charge to the clergy of Kilmore and Armagh, which being of general use, I saw no occasion to change. The latter part is new, and I submit it to your judgment.

I am, dear Sir, yours, &c.

LETTER CCXLII.

Matthew Henry to his Father, Philip Henry.

It pleaseth me sometimes to think what a ready, speedy way of intercourse there is between me and home, though at such a distance; that a letter can come from your hands to mine, through the hands of so many who are strangers to us both, in the space of sixty hours. But as ready as this way is, blessed be God, we have a readier way to send to heaven at all hours; and can convey our letters thither, and receive gracious answers thence in less time than so; that the throne of grace is always open, to which we have (how sweet a word it is,) *τὴν παῤῥησίαν*—" liberty of speech," when we are with him, and more than so, *τὴν προσαγωγὴν ἐν πεποιθήσει.* (1) We have *access with confidence:* we are introduced by the Spirit, as ambassadors conducted to the Prince by the master of the ceremonies. Esther had access to Ahasuerus, but not access with confidence; —far from it, when she said I will go in, and if I perish, I perish. But we have access with confidence, through the " new and living way," laid open for us to the Father, by the blood of his Son, who ever lives to make intercession, in the virtue and value of his satisfaction. And, if *this* be not a sufficient ground for that *πεποίθησις*—confidence, what is?

(1) Eph. iii. 12.

LETTER CCXLIII.

Dr. Doddridge to Mrs. Doddridge, on her birth-day.

My Dearest, Northampton, Sept. 4, 1740.

Though I was so unfortunate as to forget, in the morning, that this was the auspicious day which gave birth to the greatest blessing of my life, I am now happily reminded of it, and have accordingly proclaimed a kind of jubilee, on which occasion neither ale nor wine shall be wanting to drink your long life and reign!

This was after our family prayer, in which we failed not very particularly to remember you. Let me then add my most cordial wishes that God may add many comfortable and useful years to your life, and give you not only all the domestic blessings which a grateful husband (such as he is) and obedient affectionate children can afford and return to one to whom we are so much obliged, but also that you may every year and month, every week and day, advance in wisdom and piety, and be strong in bodily health, as I doubt not your soul prospers. I love you so well that I verily think I should gladly part with half the remainder of my own days, if yours seemed ending, to divide the other half with you! with you, my love,—who are so dear to me that, while I write I pause and think of you till I am lost in thought—and, in company often sit like an absent man, while my thoughts are swallowed up in a pleasing reverie, till somebody, guessing how it is with me, awakes me with Mrs. Doddridge's health.

I am, my Dearest,
Your most obliged and faithful
P. Doddridge.

LETTER CCXLIV.

Mrs. Doddridge to Dr. Doddridge, some years after their marriage.

Northampton, August 4, 1742.

Dearest and best of Men,

Did I know tender epithets, I should certainly use them; but even Mrs. Evans herself cannot help me to one; for though she says you are an angel, even that does not suit me so well whilst I myself am quite a mortal.

She has formed a very dangerous conspiracy against me upon your return; fatal, indeed, to my repose, should it succeed: but I make myself perfectly easy about it, and believe, how great soever your friendship for Mr. Evans may be, you would not choose to change wives with him; at least not at present. But, indeed, your three last delightful letters have made me quite a bankrupt in every thing but love; that, however, is a stock on which you may largely and freely draw, and give me leave to tell you, you shall not, nor cannot, exhaust it; for though I most readily yield you the superiority in every thing else, here I must, and will, contend with you, at least for an equality; and, could you see my heart, you would there behold it written in characters, which neither time nor age can erase; but, alas! so great, at present, is our unhappy distance, that, as Mr. Pope observes upon a like occasion, were even the scheme of having a crystal placed in the breast to take place, it could be of no service to us, and, therefore, we must, in this instance, as well as in many others, content ourselves with believing what we cannot perceive.

You kindly reprove me for not congratulating you, as I ought to have done, upon your birth-day; but be assured, my dear, it is as impossible for me not to breathe, as not to think of you, and not to wish you many happy, very happy years; though that claims no merit, as it will, I fear, be all found to centre in self-love. You tell me this is the last letter you can receive from me, and this would, indeed, give me great joy was it soon to be succeeded by your presence, but, alas! Friday sevennight is an age to a love and impatience like mine. I am in some pain to hear you intend to return by Bedford, lest that should detain you, but think and believe, if I may judge of you by my own heart, that it will not. I heartily thank you for all your care and goodness to poor Sammy; to have it in your power to save one more of my family from ruin will, I know, my dearest, give your generous heart great pleasure.

I can add no more; and, as all I can say does but faintly express the unutterable affection and tenderness my heart feels for you, read it by your own. I hope that kind Providence, to which I am so much indebted, will still continue to preserve you, and give you a safe and pleasant journey, and that nothing will happen to retard you a day, or an hour, longer than you intend from the impatient welcome of your then too happy

M. DODDRIDGE.

P. S.—I hope you will not be late, as I shall watch every hour with the utmost anxiety till I see you. The dear children are well, and much rejoice to hear of dear papa's coming home;—they have made their bargain with me already, that they may sit up to see you. And now I will try, once more, to have done. May every thing that is happy and pleasant await you in every further step of your journey; and be assured, my ardent prayers will not only attend you for your safe return out of the Hundreds of Essex, but in every other circumstance.

LETTER CCXLV.

DR. DODDRIDGE to MRS. DODDRIDGE. A love-letter of the same kind.

MY DEAREST, London, August 9, 1742.

Once more, my dearest love, accept my thanks, my wishes, and my heart, for they are all most affectionately yours. I continue, considering my labour, surprisingly well. Yesterday I preached for Mr. Godwin, to a vastly crowded auditory, two very plain and serious sermons, which seemed to be heard with great regard and attention. If God be pleased to make my poor endeavours of service useful in proportion to the degree in which they seem to have been acceptable, during this nine weeks' absence from you, the crown of all my earthly joys and hopes will be amply complete. But, if it be his blessed will, may I never more know what it is to be another nine weeks together separated from you! for, indeed, when I am not engaged in some public service, I seem to be but a poor fragment of myself. If I calculate aright, and can reach you by eight o'clock on Friday, it is but about one hundred and eight hours to our meeting, and nearly sixty of them will be past before this has the honour of kissing that dear hand which has written me so many charming letters. In the meantime, my dearest, I must bid you, what appears to me, a long farewell.

I will not add any thing else lest the letter should be delayed, and you made uneasy; for, next to offending God, there is nothing I fear so much as grieving my dear charmer; and, next to pleasing him, nothing I desire so much as pleasing you. I hope it will be the delightful business of all the remainder of my life; and I think there is no view in which death would appear so painful to me as that it might distress you. May the blessings of Providence and grace meet and rest upon you.

I am, my Dearest, your unutterably affectionate

P. DODDRIDGE.

P. S.—I shall rejoice to see my dear children. Tell them I remember them, and love them dearly; and assure all my dear Northampton friends that it is the greatest object of my ambition to be their humble servant as long as I live. They know for whose sake, and in whose work I would be so. I come loaded with numberless services, but if love were any weight and burden to a horse, I have so much of it on my heart that it would be necessary I should ride home upon an elephant.

LETTER CCXLVI.

Dr. Doddridge to Mrs. Doddridge, when at Bath, during a dangerous illness.

Northampton, Oct. 13, 1742,
Wednesday Night.

My Dearest,

I cannot express the concern with which I hear by good Mr. Orton that you are worse;—that you are obliged to leave off the Bath waters, to consult Dr. Oliver, &c. It would really wound me to the heart if my expectations should be disappointed, and you were to come back worse than you went.

I dare not say, nor even think of the consequences; our meeting would be so distressful, that so far as personal satisfaction was concerned I should be glad to hide myself in the grave from the bitterness and agony of such an interview. Indeed, my dear, I love you too well;—and though I sometimes admire myself wonderfully for being able to sleep and study and go cheerfully through my business though you be not here, yet when such a shocking idea as this arises, I find my heart is a great hypocrite, and that much of its tranquillity was owing to the secret hope that you were all this while growing better; and that it was indeed little more than the generosity of the miser, who can part with his money for a while, and be pretty easy though it is out of sight, when he expects to receive it quickly with large interest. I am afraid that if there were any rich medicine that could secure me from all danger and possibility of being a widower, I should be willing to sell my books and even my children (poor dear puppets, they little think what I am writing,) to purchase it.

. . . . . .

You give us a great deal of trouble here. All the family mourns, and poor Mr. Haworth and Mr. Brown, who were both here when the letter came, and Mrs. Bliss's family, with whom I have spent an hour since supper. It is not for the good of society that one person should be so much beloved, and capable of afflicting so many. But I will write no more at present, but employ myself better for a little while, and then go to bed, and see whether sleep is to be courted to relieve my cares for a few hours;—and if it does, I shall fare better than I can at present reasonably expect.

. . . . . .

And now it is Thursday morning, and all I have time to tell you is, that after five hours in bed, of which I believe I slept between three and four, I rose pretty well, but have been greatly occupied in the cares of this world and the deceitfulness of riches. I think you must, in a course of nature, want some more money, and would send you a bill as soon as I can, and yet I want it myself. The assignees of the worshipful and worthy Mr. Prat called on me yesterday for 15*l.* 0*s.* 7½*d.*, which I must pay them, and then receive at the rate of 25*l.* a year for my stable, which is an evil occurrence, and so much the more so, as I brought it upon myself by not following the affair up as I ought. But the much greater concern about you I also brought upon myself by my dirty journeys to Coventry in the year 1730; (¹) and yet I would trudge on foot to Bath with all my heart to bring you back half so well.

Dear creature,
Your ever affectionate and too solicitous
P. Doddridge.

LETTER CCXLVII.

The accident alluded to in this letter occurred on the Thames, when a boat, in which the Doctor had embarked, was nearly swamped.

Dr. Doddridge to Mrs. Doddridge.

My Dearest, London, July 30, 1748.

The long letter which I inclose to Mr. Bunnyan, and send open for your perusal, prevents me from

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(¹) At the time of his marriage.

being able to answer that charming one which I received from the best of wives and of friends, by the last post, in the particular manner I could wish; but permit me most affectionately to thank you for it, and to assure you, that it was a great cordial to my heart. I can truly say there is nothing in the world which gives me so lively a relish of the remarkable deliverance I received on Monday, when I was within a hand's breadth of being lost, as the thought of the escape which you, my dearest, had from a calamity, which would, in those circumstances, have borne so hard upon you, and the hope that my life is spared to make yours happier than your love to me would permit it to be without me. I doubt not, but that as your prayers have long contributed to my safety and comfort, so they did, in that moment of extremity, greatly conduce to my deliverance. I bless God, I was not terrified with any amazement, and could cheerfully have acquiesced in whatsoever Providence had appointed. I think I told you Mrs. Waugh is undertaking a fifth edition of The Rise and Progress, large octavo, though the fourth, in duodecimo, be not quite gone off; but she judges it proper to have them always ready in both sizes. The piece which Dr. Wishart has sent against Colonel Gardiner's Life, or rather, against the poor author of it, is in London; and application was made yesterday to Mrs. Waugh to sell it, but she refused. I expect a great deal of virulence in it; but hope integrity and uprightness will protect me, and bear up my spirits, as well as my reputation, against all its venom.

Many tokens of undeserved esteem do I receive; shall I wonder at some reproaches? God hath set the one over against the other, that I may neither be exalted nor dejected above measure; and I bless Him, I do find it in a sober and sweet equanimity. May I promote my Master's honour, and be found fit for his kingdom; and while I am on this side of it, may I have your love to delight me, your prudence to advise me; and may I be able to keep you free from any thing that would corrode and distress your tender, generous heart, and I shall be contented and thankful whatever may happen.

P. DODDRIDGE.

LETTER CCXLVIII.

DR. (afterwards) BISHOP WARBURTON to DR. DODDRIDGE.
An interchange of sympathy.

DEAR SIR, Feb. 9, 1743.

I should not have been thus long in making my best acknowledgments for your last kind letter, had not my absence from home, and a late unhappy domestic affair prevented me, and engrossed all my thoughts. The misfortunes of an excellent sister and her children, by her husband's ill success in trade, yet attended to with the utmost honesty and sobriety; so that, to his own ruin, he has been a considerable benefactor to the public while in trade, and his creditors at last no losers, but himself undone. I do not know whether this be an alleviation or aggravation of the misfortune, but I can tell you, with the utmost truth, that I share with this distressed sister and her children (who all live with me) the small revenue it has pleased God to bless me with, with much greater satisfaction than others spend theirs on their pleasures. I do not know how it is, but though I am far from a hero, yet I find Brutus expresses my exact sentiments when he says to Cicero, "Aliter alii cum suis vivunt. Nihil ego possum in Sororis meæ Liberis facere, quo possit expleri voluntas mea aut officium." But you will reprove me, I know, for this false modesty, in apologizing for this comparison, and say, where is the wonder that a man who pretends to be a Christian should not come behind a Pagan, how great soever in the performance of moral duties! However this be, I can assure you, my only concern on this occasion was for an incomparable mother, whom I feared the misfortunes of a favourite daughter would have too much affected. But, I thank God, religion, that religion which you make such amiable drawings of in all your writings, was more than a support to her. But I ask pardon for talking so long of myself. This is a subject, too, I hate to think of, and never talk of, yet I could not forbear mentioning to a man I so much esteem, and whose heart I know to be so right.

It was with great concern I found good Mrs. Doddridge so ill at Bath. I know the grief this must have occasioned you: but I know your sufficiency. I trust in God she has by this time received the expected benefit from the waters. It was by accident, a little before I left Mr. Allen's, I saw her name in Leake's book (for then I had not received your last.) I visited her twice. The first time she was going out to drink the waters, the second time a visiting; so I had not the pleasure of being long with her. You may be assured I would not hinder her the first time, and I made a conscience of it, not to do it the second; for it was a new acquaintance she was going to make; a matter, perhaps, as useful for her amusement while she staid at Bath, as the other for her health. Thus, you see, my good friend, we have all something to make us think less complaisantly of the world. Religion will do great things. It will always make the bitter waters of Marah wholesome and palatable. But we must not think it will usually turn water into wine because it did so once. Nor is it fit that it should; unless this were our place of rest, where we were to expect the bridegroom. I do the best I can to make life passable, and should, I think, do the same if I were a mere Pagan! To be always lamenting its miseries, or always seeking after its pleasures, take us off equally from the work of our salvation: and though I be extremely cautious what sect I follow in religion, yet any in philosophy will serve my turn, and honest Sancho Pancha's as well as any; who, on his return from an important commission, when asked by his master whether they should mark the day with a *black* or a *white* stone, replied, "Faith, sir, if you will be ruled by me, with neither, but with good *brown* *ochre.*" What this philosopher thought of his commission, I think of human life in general; *good brown ochre* is the complexion of it.

W. WARBURTON.

LETTER CCXLIX.

NATHANIEL NEAL, ESQ. to DR. DODDRIDGE, during his last illness.—True friendship.

DEAR SIR, Tunbridge Wells, Sept. 1, 1751.

I feel a struggle in my breast whilst I deliberate whether, considering the feeble state of your health, I should break or keep silence; but such is the officiousness of friendship, anxious, though impotent, to afford relief, that inquiry must be made after an afflicted friend, though at some hazard of disturbing his slumbers.

How affected we all were (in which number I include Mr. Barker and his lady, for in our love, and in our distress for you, we are all one) with those various events which befel you in your progress to and on your arrival at Bristol, I choose not to mention; yet I trust in God, it will be seen in the issue, that it was the kind hand of his providence that conducted you thither, as to the waters of life: for though to you it were a matter of choice, not to revive at all, till you obtain a part in the better resurrection, yet, in compassion to us, in compassion to the world, it is my daily prayer (oh, forgive me this wrong!) that you may not yet increase the number, and enhance the triumphs of the blessed.

I persuade myself, my dear friend, that you have left all your cares as well as all your business at Northampton, and that you will be inaccessible to every uninvited guest. Ceremony is the bane of solitude; and even the draught of pious or cheerful converse should be taken in measure, where the appetite of the soul is so eager, and every kind of exercise has been found so fatal.

But whence have you your remittances to Bristol? The settling accounts is a trouble of which you should now be eased: I desire, therefore, that either you or Mrs. Doddridge will draw on me for any sum you want, without any other ceremony than advising me of it by a line; or if you can devise any other method to prove my friendship, it will be a kind relief to one who is oppressed under a sense of his inability, in this season of difficulty, to do you service.

And now, my dear friend, though I am no advocate for the sleeping of the soul, yet methinks I could wish that you, who are *all soul*, having so nearly worn out the frail vehicle in its service, could for a while suspend the thinking power, that the body might have time to revive. We all submit to deny ourselves the expectation of hearing from you, that the time a letter would cost you may be devoted to rest. A line from any hand will satisfy us, if you are better; and, if otherwise, a word will be more than we can well support. Compliments are vain whilst you possess our hearts; and as for Mrs. Doddridge, while as ministering to you she shares the office, may she partake of the refreshment of angels!

Adieu. Be God ever with you; which is the most comprehensive good that can be wished you by

Your most affectionate friend
and humble servant,
N. Neal.

LETTER CCL.

Lord Lyttleton to Dr. Doddridge, while at Lisbon, during his last illness.

Dear Sir, Hagley, Oct. 5, 1751.

My concern was so great on the account I received from the Bishop of Worcester of the ill state of your health, that in the midst of my grief for the death of my father, when I had scarce performed my last duties to him, I wrote to you at Bristol; which letter, I find, you never received. Indeed, my dear friend, there are few losses I should more sensibly feel than yours, if it should please God to take you from me; but, I trust, he will be so gracious to your family and your friends as to prolong your life, and defer your reward for some time longer; and I am persuaded no human means can be found better than those which have been prescribed to you of removing to Lisbon, and passing the winter in that mild climate.

Let me know by every mail how you do, and depend upon it, that if providence shall call you away to the crown prepared for you, nothing in my power shall be wanting, as long as I live, to show the affection I had for you, in my regard to your widow and family; but I hope your life will be preserved for their sake, to be an ornament to the Christian church, and a support of religion in these bad times. May God Almighty grant it, and may we meet again with the pleasure which friends restored to each other feel after so alarming a parting. But if that be denied, may we meet in the next world to part no more, through his power, who will, I trust, blot out my offences, and make me worthy to be a partaker with you of his heavenly kingdom.

My wife desires me to assure you of her sincere and affectionate concern for you, and so do all your other acquaintance here.

I am, with the tenderest regard and affection,
Dear Sir,
Your most faithful Friend and Servant,
GEORGE LYTTLETON.

LETTER CCLI.

Bishop Warburton to **Dr. Doddridge**, a few weeks before his death.

Dear Sir, Prior Park, Sept. 2, 1751.

Your kind letter gave me, and will give Mr. Allen great concern; but for ourselves, not you. Death, whenever it happens, in a life spent like yours, is to be envied, not pitied; and you will have the prayers of your friends, as conquerors have the shouts of the crowd. God preserve you; if he continues you here, to go on in his service; if he takes you to himself, to be crowned with glory.

Be assured the memory of our friendship will be as durable as my life. I order an inquiry to be made of your health from time to time; but if you fatigue yourself any more in writing, it will prevent me that satisfaction.

I am, dear Sir,
Your most affectionate friend and brother,
W. Warburton.

LETTER CCLII.

John Wesley to **Mrs. Emma Moon.**

My dear Sister, Norwich, December 6, 1767.

I can easily believe that nothing would be wanting to me, which it was in your power to supply: for

I am persuaded your heart is as my heart, as is the case with all the "souls whom Himself vouchsafes to unite in fellowship divine." What is always in your power is, to bear me before the throne of grace. One thing in particular which I frequently desire is, "a calm evening of a various day;" that I may have no conflicts at the last, but rather, if God sees good, before "my flesh and my heart faileth."

In every place where Mr. Whitfield has been, he has laboured in the same friendly, Christian manner. God has indeed effectually broken down the wall of partition which was between us. Thirty years ago we were one: then the sower of tares rent us asunder: but now a stronger than he has made us one again.

There is no weakness either in our body or mind, but Satan endeavours to avail himself of it. That kind of dulness or listlessness I take to be originally a pure effect of bodily constitution. As such, it is not imputable to us in any degree, unless we give way to it. So long as we diligently resist, it is no more blamable than sleepiness, or weariness of body.

Peace be multiplied upon you!

I am, my dear sister,
Your affectionate brother.

LETTER CCLIII.

Rev. John Newton to a Nobleman. The pleasures of Christian intercourse.

My Lord, June, 1773.

My old cast-off acquaintance, Horace, occasionally came in my way this morning.—I opened it upon lib. iii. od. 29. Did I not know the proposal to be utterly impracticable, how gladly should I imitate it, and send your lordship, in honest prose, if not in elegant verse, an invitation. But I must content myself with the idea of the pleasure it would give me to sit with you half a day under my favourite great tree, and converse with you, not concerning the comparatively petty affairs of human governments, but of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God. How many delightful subjects would suggest themselves in a free and retired conversation! The excellency of our King, the permanency and glory of his kingdom, the beauty of his administration, the privileges of his subjects, the review of what he has done for us, and the prospect of what he has prepared for us in future; —and if, while we were conversing, he should be pleased to join us, (as he did the disciples when walking to Emmaus,) how would our hearts burn within us! Indeed, whether we are alone or in company, the most interesting topics strike us but faintly, unless he is pleased to afford his gracious influence; but when he is present, light, love, liberty, and joy, spring up in the hearts that know him.—This reminds me (as I have mentioned Horace) to restore some beautiful lines to their proper application. They are impious and idolatrous as he uses them, but have an expressive propriety in the mouth of a believer:—

Lucem redde tuæ, dux bone, patriæ:
Instar veris enim vultus ubi tuus
Affulsit populo, gratior it dies
Et soles melius nitent.

But we cannot meet. All that is left for me, is to use the liberty you allow me of offering a few hints upon these subjects by letter, not because you know them not, but because you love them. The hour is coming, when all impediments shall be removed. All distinctions shall cease that are founded upon sublunary things, and the earth and all its works shall be burnt up. Glorious day! May our souls be filled with the thought, and learn to estimate all things around us now, by the view in which they will appear to us then.

May the cheering contemplation of the hope set before us, support and animate us to improve the interval, and fill us with an holy ambition of shining as lights in the world, to the praise and glory of his grace who has called us out of darkness. Encompassed as we are with snares, temptations, and infirmities, it is possible (by his promised assistance) to live in some good measure above the world while we are in it; above the influence of its cares, its smiles, or its frowns. Our conversation, *πολιτευμα*, our citizenship, is in heaven. We are not at home, but only resident here for a season, to fulfil an appointed service; and the Lord, whom we serve, has encouraged us to hope, that he will guide us by his wisdom, strengthen us by his power, and comfort us with the light of his countenance, which is better than life. Every blessing we receive from him is a token of his favour and a pledge of that far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory which he has reserved for us. O! to hear him say at last, "Well done, good and faithful servant, enter thou into the joy of thy Lord!" will be a rich amends for all that we can lose, suffer, or forbear, for his sake.

I subscribe myself, with great sincerity, &c.

LETTER CCLIV.

Rev. John Newton to Mr. W——.

My dear Sir, May 3, 1776.

Will you accept a short letter as an apology for a long silence. I have been working my way through a heap of unanswered letters; (I should have said half through;) had there been one from you in the number, it would have been dispatched amongst the first; but as there was not, I have deferred a little and a little longer, till I am constrained to say, Forgive me. I hope, and trust, you find the Lord's presence with you in your new habitation; otherwise you would think it a dungeon. There is the same difference amongst people now, as there was between the Egyptians and Israel of old. Multitudes are buried alive under a cloud of thick darkness, but all the Lord's people have light in their dwellings. Ah! how many great and fair houses are there without the heavenly inhabitant. It might be written upon their doors, "God is not here;" and when you go in, you may be sure of it, for there is neither peace nor truth within the walls. This thought has often struck me, when I have been to fine seats, as they are called. When the Lord is not known and acknowledged, the rooms are but cells, in which the poor criminals have licence to eat and sleep a little while, till the sentence under which they lie condemned shall be executed upon them. On the other hand, the houses of believers, though most of them called cottages, are truly palaces; for it is the presence of the king that makes the court. There the Lord reigns upon a throne of grace, and there a royal guard of angels take their stand to watch over and minister to the heirs of salvation. After all, the best houses upon earth are but inns, where we are accommodated a little time, while we are doing our Master's business. It is hardly doing you justice to say, you live where you have a house. Your dwelling, your home, is in heaven; here you are but a sojourner: but, to express it in a more honourable manner, you are an ambassador, intrusted with affairs of great importance, to manage for the King, your Master. Every believer, while upon earth, in his several calling, is an ambassador for Christ, though not called to the ministry. He has something of his Master's character and interest to maintain. He derives his supplies, his supports, his instructions from above; and his great charge and care is, to be faithful to his commission, and every other care he may confidently cast upon the Lord to whom he belongs. In this sense we are to take state upon ourselves, to remember our dignity, and not to stoop to a conformity to the poor world among whom we live; we are neither to imitate their customs, nor regard their maxims, nor speak their language, nor desire their honours or their favours, nor fear their frowns, for the Lord whom we serve has engaged to maintain and protect us, and has given us his instructions, to which it is both our duty and our honour to conform. And though the world that know him not, cannot be expected to think very favourably of us, yet they can do us no real harm, if they do not prevail upon our unbelief, and make us shrink from his service. And if, through grace, we are preserved so as not to be ashamed of him now, hereafter he will not be ashamed of us. If they account us as gazing-stocks and laughing-stocks at present for our singularity, if they reproach, revile, and despise us, we may pity them; for a day is coming when they shall be ashamed, and when we shall stand forth with boldness, and shine like the sun in our Lord's kingdom. O what manner of love, that we who were like others by nature, should be thus distinguished by grace! We knew him not, and therefore we could not love him; we were alienated from him; sin, self, and Satan ruled in our hearts; our eyes were blinded, and we were posting along in the road that leads to death, without suspecting danger. But he would not let us perish. Though when he knocked at the door of our hearts, we repeatedly refused him entrance; he would not take a denial, but exerted a gracious force; made us willing in the day of his power, and saved us in defiance of ourselves. And from the happy hour when he enabled us to surrender ourselves to him, how tenderly has he pitied us, how seasonably has he relieved us, how powerfully upheld us! How many Ebenezers have we been called upon to rear to his praise! And he has said, he will never leave us nor forsake us. And O what a prospect lies before us! When by his counsel he has guided us through life, he will receive us to his kingdom, give us a crown of glory, and place us near himself, to see him as he is, and to be satisfied with his love for ever. How many years did we live before we had the least idea of what we were born to know and enjoy! Many things look dark around us, and before us, but the spreading of the gospel is, I trust, a token for good. O that we might see the work running not only broader as to numbers, but deeper as to the life, power, and experience, in the hearts, tempers, and conversation of those who profess the truth! The

Lord has removed many of his dear people from ——— to flourish in a better world. Not only many of the old cedars, but several of the choicest young plants are taken away. Should I be sorry that the days of their mourning are ended, and that they are out of the reach of snares and storms! Nay, I should rather rejoice; and I do. Yet I feel bereaved. I miss them; they used to pray for me, comfort me, and often teach and shame me by their example. Pray that the Lord may raise us up more. I trust he has not wholly withdrawn from us. We walk in peace, and have some seasons of refreshment: now and then we hear of a new inquirer. I would be thankful when, as an angler, I catch a single fish. But, O that the Lord would put his great net in my hand, and fill it with a shoal!

I am, dearest Sir,
Your affectionate and obliged servant.

LETTER CCLV.

Rev. John Newton to William Cowper, Esq.

My dear Friend, Charles Square, April 29, 1780.

We seldom send any thing to a friend with a more interested and selfish view than a frank; for we expect not only to have it returned, but that what we send empty should be returned full. I hope when the weather will not allow you to be all day in the garden, you are preparing a cargo for my frank; letters, essays, thoughts, bon mots, tales, fables, in a word, miscellanies of all kinds, in prose or verse, whatever bears the signature of your hand, or of your manner, will be welcome; and as long as you find materials, I will endeavour to find franks, and to send you peppercorns of thanks in return, as often as I can.

The recovery of my arm has advanced happily without interruption. I can now put on my great coat, have almost done with my sling, and hope, in a few days more, to be released from the bandages. Blessed be the Lord, my best physician and friend, my present and all-sufficient help. I have seen no reason yet to regret my fall, nor have I been permitted to do it; yet I may consider it as a chastisement, though of a gentle and merciful kind. A sinner need not spend much time in searching out the cause of an affliction; but that the afflictions of such a sinner as I should be so seldom, so moderate, so soon removed, depends upon reasons which I should never have known but by the word of God. There I am taught to spell his name, " The Lord, the Lord God, long suffering, abundant in mercy, forgiving iniquity, transgression, and sin;" and thus I read the reason why I am not consumed.

The spring, long retarded, begins to force its way, and to make its appearance in the trees which surround our square. The close behind our garden seems as green as your meadows, and the cows that are feeding in it, have very much the look of country cows. St. Luke's church affords us a sort of substitute for ——— steeple. Islington (by the help of an imagination which loves to concur in putting an agreeable deception upon itself) passes for ———; and the New River, if it did not run under ground hereabouts, would soon obtain a new name, and be called the Ouse. We take the same liberty with persons as with places, and cannot walk much in the streets without meeting a somebody that recalls somebody else to our minds. But to impose upon ourselves so far as to think any place like Orchard Side, or any persons like Mrs. —— or Mr. ——, exceeds our present attainment in the art of substitution. In other respects, our situation is, upon the whole, so well, that I may apply to either of you—

> Excepto quod non simul esses, cætera lætus.

But, indeed, a removal from two such dear friends is a dislocation, and gives me at times a mental feeling, something analogous to what my body felt when my arm was forced from its socket. I live in hopes that this mental dislocation will one day be happily reduced likewise, and that we shall come together again as bone to its bone. The connexion which the Lord himself formed between us, was undoubtedly formed for eternity, but I trust we shall have more of the pleasure and comfort of it in time. And that I shall yet hear you say, " Come, magnify the Lord with me, and let us exalt his name together; for he hath turned my mourning into joy, and he hath taken off my sackcloth and girded me with gladness."

Mrs. Newton is not at home, but she knows what I am about, and sends her best love. She has very tolerable health. I was at first afraid the hurry and anxiety of her spirits, on account of my fall, would have brought a return of all her nervous complaints. I felt more for her than myself, while the four men were almost displacing my bones which were right, in order to put that right which was out of place. But while I was in that attitude, I may say with Nehemiah, "So I prayed unto the God of heaven;" I prayed for her, and the Lord heard me. She was at first exceedingly terrified, and felt the effects of the shock for a little time, but I hope they are quite subsided.

I am, dearest Sir,
Your most affectionate and obliged,
J. NEWTON.

LETTER CCLVI.

REV. JOHN NEWTON to MR. B——. A Sabbath-morning salutation.

MY DEAR SIR, December 3, 1780.

"The Lord is risen indeed." This is his day, when we are called to meet in his house, and (we in this branch of his family) to rejoice at his table. I meant to write yesterday, but could not. I trust it is not unsuitable to the design and privilege of this day to give you a morning salutation in his name; and to say, "Come, magnify the Lord with me, and let us exalt his name together." If I am not mistaken, I have met you this morning already. Were you not at Gethsemane? have you not been at Golgotha? did I did not see you at the tomb? This is our usual circuit, yours and mine, on these mornings, indeed every morning; for what other places are worth visiting? what other objects are worth seeing? Oh this wonderful love; this blood of sovereign efficacy! the infallible antidote which kills sin, cures the sinner, gives sight to the blind, and life to the dead. How often have I known it turn sorrow into joy.

O thou Saviour and Sun of the soul, shine forth this morning, and cheer and gladden all our hearts. Shine upon me and mine, upon all whom I love, and on all who love thee! Shine powerfully on my dear friends at ——, and let us know that, though we are absent from each other, thou art equally near to us all.

I must to breakfast, then dress, and away to court. Oh for a sight of the King! and oh to hear him speak! for his voice is music, and his person is beauty. When he says, "Remember me," and the heart hears, what a train of incidents is at once revived!—from the manger to the cross, what he said, what he did, how he lived, how he loved, how he died,—all is marvellous, affecting, humbling, transporting! I think I know what I would be, and what I would do too if I could.

How near would I get, how low would I fall, how would I weep and sing in a breath: and with what solemn earnestness would I recommend him to my fellow sinners. But, alas! when I would do good, evil is present with me. Pray for me, and help me likewise to praise the Lord, for his mercies are "new every morning and every moment."

I am your affectionate.

LETTER CCLVII.

Rev. John Newton to his Wife.

Antigua, 4th August.

You will perceive by the date, that this is one of the days which I pass, as much as I can, in retirement and reflection. My correspondence with you falls in with my design. I hope a mutual affection will be rather a help than a hinderance to us in our most important concerns. Not one of the many blessings which God has bestowed upon me, excites in me a more ardent desire to be thankful, than that which he has given me in you. And the remembrance of our past endearments is a powerful preservative, to keep me from low and unworthy pursuits. In like manner, nothing reconciles me so much to the troubles and hazards incident to my situation, as the thought that I endure them for your sake, and that from you I expect a recompense answerable to my wishes. I hope I may say this, without derogating from those motives which ought to have no less weight with me if you were out of the question. My meaning is, that I ought to be very thankful to the goodness of the Lord, who has thus ordered my duty and my inclinations to go hand in hand, and in a manner bribed me to my true interest. And this enhances my regard to you, that I am not only indebted to you for my pleasures here, but that you will be a mean of preparing me for those which I hope for hereafter. This is the proper foundation for abiding love. A love like mine is calculated for all seasons and changes; equally suited to enlarge the advantages of prosperity beyond the comprehension of a stranger, and to gild the uneasy hours of pain and trouble. I may lose money, health, liberty, or limbs; but, while it pleases God to preserve my memory, nothing can rob me of the consciousness that you are mine, and that I am favoured with the dearest place in your heart. The vessel is now under sail, so I must conclude. I hope to follow her soon. Adieu, my dearest. Believe me to be almost continually praying for you, and studying how to approve myself

Yours, &c.

LETTER CCLVIII.

Rev. John Newton to his Wife.

Shebar, 29th March.

The Spectator tells us that Socrates, in discoursing upon marriage, placed it in such an advantageous light, that he induced all his auditors to marry as fast as possible. And yet it seems he was at that time himself wedded to a noted shrew; so that he could hardly draw many persuasive arguments from his own experience. Surely, had he been matched like me, he would have spoken with still greater emphasis. Methinks if I had his eloquence, I could delight to speak on this subject from morning to night. I could tell the foolish world how strangely they wander from the path of happiness, while they seek that satisfaction in luxury, wealth, or ambition, which nothing but mutual love can afford.

I give and take a good deal of raillery among the sea-captains I meet with here. They think I have not a right notion of life, and I am sure they have not. They say I am melancholy; I tell them they are mad. They say I am a slave to one woman, which I deny, but can prove that some of them are mere slaves to a hundred. They wonder at my humour; I pity theirs. They can form no idea of my happiness; I answer, I think the better of it on that account; for I should be ashamed of it if it was suited to the level of those who can be pleased with a drunken debauch or the smile of a prostitute. We shall hardly come to an agreement on these points, for they pretend to appeal to experience against me. Just so some of the poor objects in Bethlem, while raving in straw and dirt, mistake their chains for ornaments of gold, announce themselves to be kings or lords, and are firmly persuaded that every person who pities them is out of his wits.

LETTER CCLIX.

Rev. John Newton to his Wife.

Settera Crue, 6th February.

I have calculated, that if all the letters I have sent you since our first parting in May 1750 were transcribed in order, they would fill one hundred and twenty such sheets as this on all sides. An eye less favourable than yours might find very many faults in so large a collection; but, if they have the merit of pleasing you, it pleases me more to have written them, than if I had published so many volumes to be applauded by the world. I hope I need not be ashamed of them, if they were to fall into other hands. I hope I have in general expressed my regard in terms which reason and religion will warrant. I consider our union as a peculiar effect and gift of an indulgent Providence; and therefore, as a talent to be improved to higher ends, to promoting his will and service upon earth, and to the assisting each other to prepare for an eternal state, to which a few years at the furthest will introduce us. Were these points wholly neglected, however great our satisfaction might be for the present, it would be better never to have seen each other; since the time must soon come, when, of all the endearments of our connexion nothing will remain, but the consciousness how greatly we were favoured, and how we improved the favours we possessed. We shall hereafter have reason to be thankful even for these frequent separations, if they should conduce to fix these views more effectually in our minds. With such thoughts I endeavour to oppose my impatience to see you. My occasional anxieties, and my indifference to every thing around me when you are not with me, I compare to the sense of feeling, which often costs a person pain; but, if he were destitute of it, he would be incapable of pleasure, and little better than dead. If my heart were not susceptive of love and tenderness, I might escape many a twinge; but I have not suffered enough to make me envy those whose whole thought and solicitude terminate on their own dear selves.

LETTER CCLX.

WILLIAM COWPER, ESQ. to LADY HESKETH. Account of his introduction to the family of the Unwins.

MY DEAR COUSIN, Huntingdon, Sept. 14, 1765.

The longer I live here, the better I like the place, and the people who belong to it. I am upon very good terms with no less than five familes, besides two or three odd scrambling fellows like myself. The last acquaintance I made here is with the race of the Unwins, consisting of father and mother, son and daughter, the most comfortable, social folks you ever knew. The son is about twenty-one years of age, one of the most unreserved and amiable young men I ever conversed with. He is not yet arrived at that time of life, when suspicion recommends itself to us in the form of wisdom, and sets every thing but our own dear selves at an immeasurable distance from our esteem and confidence. Consequently he is known almost as soon as seen, and having nothing in his heart that makes it necessary for him to keep it barred and bolted, opens it to the perusal even of a stranger. The father is a clergyman, and the son is designed for orders. The design, however, is quite his own, proceeding merely from his being and having always been sincere in his belief and love of the gospel. Another acquaintance I have lately made is with a Mr. Nicholson, a North-country divine, very poor, but very good, and very happy. He reads prayers here twice a day, all the year round; and travels on foot to serve two churches every Sunday through the year, his journey out and home again being sixteen miles. I supped with him last night. He gave me bread and cheese, and a black jug of ale of his own brewing, and doubtless brewed by his own hands. Another of my acquaintance is Mr. ——, a thin, tall, old man, and as good as he is thin. He drinks nothing but water, and eats no flesh; partly (I believe) from a religious scruple, (for he is very religious,) and partly in the spirit of a valetudinarian. He is to be met with every morning of his life, at about six o'clock, at a fountain of very fine water, about a mile from the town, which is reckoned extremely like the Bristol spring. Being both early risers, and the only early walkers in the place, we soon became acquainted. His great piety can be equalled by nothing but his great regularity, for he is the most perfect time-piece in the world. I have received a visit likewise from Mr. ——. He is very much a gentleman, well-read, and sensible. I am persuaded, in short, that if I had the choice of all England, where to fix my abode, I could not have chosen better for myself, and most likely I should not have chosen so well.

You say, you hope it is not necessary for salvation, to undergo the same afflictions that I have undergone. No! my dear Cousin. God deals with his children as a merciful father; he does not, as he himself tells us, afflict willingly the sons of men. Doubtless there are many, who, having been placed by his good providence out of the reach of any great evil and the influence of bad example, have from their very infancy been partakers of the grace of his holy Spirit, in such a manner as never to have allowed themselves in any grievous offence against him. May you love him more and more day by day; as every day, while you think upon him, you will find him more worthy of your love: and may you be finally accepted with him for his sake, whose intercession for all his faithful servants cannot but prevail!

Yours ever,
W. C.

LETTER CCLXI.

William Cowper, Esq. to Mrs. Cowper.

My Dear Cousin,

I have not been behindhand in reproaching myself with neglect, but desire to take shame to myself for my unprofitableness in this, as well as in all other respects. I take the next immediate opportunity however of thanking you for yours, and of assuring you, that instead of being surprised at your silence, I rather wonder that you, or any of my friends, have any room left for so careless and negligent a correspondent in your memories. I am obliged to you for the intelligence you send me of my kindred, and rejoice to hear of their welfare. He who settles the bounds of our habitations has at length cast our lot at a great distance from each other; but I do not therefore forget their former kindness to me, or cease to be interested in their well being. You live in the centre of a world I know you do not delight in. Happy are you, my dear friend, in being able to discern the insufficiency of all it can afford to fill and satisfy the desires of an immortal soul. That God who created us for the enjoyment of himself, has determined in mercy that it shall fail us here, in order that the blessed result of all our inquiries after happiness in the creature may be a warm pursuit and a close attachment to our true interests, in fellowship and communion with him, through the name and mediation of a dear Redeemer. I bless his goodness and grace, that I have any reason to hope I am a partaker with you in the desire after better things, than are to be found in a world polluted with sin, and therefore devoted to destruction. May he enable us both to consider our present life in its only true light, as an opportunity put into our hands to glorify him amongst men, by a conduct suited to his word and will. I am miserably defective in this holy and blessed art; but I hope there is at the bottom of all my sinful infirmities a sincere desire to live just so long as I may be enabled, in some poor measure, to answer the end of my existence in this respect; and then to obey the summons, and attend him in a world where they who are his servants here shall pay him an unsinful obedience for ever. Your dear mother is too good to me, and puts a more charitable construction upon my silence than the fact will warrant. I am not better employed than I should be in corresponding with her. I have that within which hinders me wretchedly in every thing that I ought to do, but is prone to trifle, and let time and every good thing run to waste. I hope however to write to her soon.

My love and best wishes attend Mr. Cowper, and all that inquire after me. May God be with you, to bless you, and do you good by all his dispensations; do not forget me when you are speaking to our best Friend before his mercy-seat.

Yours ever,
W. C.

LETTER CCLXII.

WILLIAM COWPER, ESQ. to the REV. JOHN NEWTON.

DEAR SIR, May 3, 1780.

You indulge me in such a variety of subjects, and allow me such a latitude of excursion in this scribbling employment, that I have no excuse for silence. I am much obliged to you for swallowing such boluses, as I send you, for the sake of my gilding, and verily believe that I am the only man alive, from whom they would be welcome to a palate like yours. I wish I could make them more splendid than they are, more alluring to the eye, at least, if not more pleasing to the taste; but my leaf gold is tarnished, and has received such a tinge from the vapours that are ever brooding over my mind, that I think it no small proof of your partiality to me, that you will read my letters. I am not fond of long-winded metaphors; I have always observed, that they halt at the latter end of their progress, and so do mine. I deal much in ink indeed, but not such ink as is employed by poets, and writers of essays. Mine is a harmless fluid, and guilty of no deceptions but such as may prevail without the least injury to the person imposed on. I draw mountains, valleys, woods, and streams, and ducks, and dab-chicks. I admire them myself, and Mrs. Unwin admires them; and her praise, and my praise put together, are fame enough for me. O! I could spend whole days and moonlight nights in feeding upon a lovely prospect! My eyes drink the rivers as they flow. If every human being upon earth could think for one quarter of an hour as I have done for many years, there might perhaps be many miserable men among them, but not an unawakened one could be found, from the Arctic to the Antarctic circle. At present, the difference between them and me is greatly to their advantage. I delight in baubles, and know them to be so: for rested in, and viewed without a reference to their author, what is the earth, what are the planets, what is the sun itself but a bauble? Better for a man never to have seen them, or to see them with the eyes of a brute, stupid and unconscious of what he beholds, than not to be able to say, "The maker of all these wonders is my friend!" Their eyes have never been opened, to see that they are trifles; mine have been, and will be till they are closed for ever.

They think a fine estate, a large conservatory, a hothouse, rich as a West-Indian garden, things of consequence; visit them with pleasure, and muse upon them with ten times more. I am pleased with a frame of four lights, doubtful whether the few pines it contains will ever be worth a farthing; amuse myself with a green-house which Lord Bute's gardener could take upon his back, and walk away with; and when I have paid it the accustomed visit, and watered it, and given it air, I say to myself—"This is not mine, it is a plaything lent me for the present: I must leave it soon."

W. C.

LETTER CCLXIII.

William Cowper, Esq. to the Rev. John Newton. The stupidity of slanderers, &c.

My dear Cousin, June 23. 1780.

. . . . . .

And why have I said all this? especially to you, who have hitherto said it to me—not because I had the least desire of informing a wiser man than myself, but because the observation was naturally suggested by the recollection of your letter, and that letter, though not the last, happened to be uppermost in my mind. I can compare this mind of mine to nothing that resembles it more, than to a board that is under the carpenter's plane (I mean while I am writing to you,) the shavings are my uppermost thoughts; after a few strokes of the tool, it acquires a new surface; this again, upon a repetition of his task, he takes off, and a new surface still succeeds—whether the shavings of the present day will be worth your acceptance, I know not; I am unfortunately made neither of cedar nor of mahogany, but *Truncus ficulnus, inutile lignum*—consequently, though I should be planed till I am as thin as a wafer, it will be but rubbish to the last.

It is not strange that you should be the subject of a false report; for the sword of slander, like that of war, devours one as well as another; and a blameless character is particularly delicious to its unsparing appetite. But that you should be the object of such a report, you who meddle less with the designs of government than almost any man that lives under it, this is strange indeed. It is well, however, when they who account it good sport to traduce the reputation of another, invent a story that refutes itself. I wonder they do not always endeavour to accommodate their fiction to the real character of the person; their tale would then at least have an air of probability, and it might cost a peaceable good man much more trouble to disprove it. But perhaps it would not be easy to discern what part of your conduct lies more open to such an attempt than another; or what it is that you either say or do, at any time, that presents a fair opportunity to the most ingenious slanderer, to slip in a falsehood between your words, or actions, that shall seem to be of a piece with either. You hate compliment, I know; but by your leave this is not one—it is a truth—worse and worse—now I have praised you indeed—well, you must thank yourself for it; it was absolutely done without the least intention on my part, and proceeded from a pen that, as far as I can remember, was never guilty of flattery since I knew how to hold it. He that slanders me, paints me blacker than I am, and he that flatters me, whiter—they both daub me; and when I look in the glass of conscience, I see myself disguised by both—I had as lief my tailor should sew gingerbread nuts on my coat instead of buttons, as that any man should call my Bristol stone a diamond. The tailor's trick would not at all embellish my suit, nor the flatterer's make me at all the richer. I never make a present to my friend of what I dislike myself. Ergo (I have reached the conclusion at last,) I did not mean to flatter you.

We have sent a petition to Lord Dartmouth, by this post, praying him to interfere in parliament in behalf of the poor lace-makers. I say we, because I have signed it; Mr. G. drew it up, Mr. —— did not think it grammatical, therefore he would not sign it. Yet I think Priscian himself would have pardoned the manner for the sake of the matter. I dare say if his lordship does not comply with the prayer of it, it will not be because he thinks it of more consequence to write grammatically, than that the poor should eat, but for some better reason.

My love to all under your roof.

Yours,
W. C.

LETTER CCLXIV.

William Cowper, Esq. to Mrs. Cowper. Insensible approach of age.

My dear Cousin, July 20, 1780.

Mr. Newton having desired me to be of the party, I am come to meet him. You see me sixteen years older at the least than when I saw you last; but the effects of time seem to have taken place rather on the outside of my head, than within it. What was brown, is become grey, but what was foolish, remains foolish still. Green fruit must rot before it ripens, if the season is such as to afford it nothing but cold winds and dark clouds, that interrupt every ray of sunshine. My days steal away silently, and march on (as poor mad King Lear would have made his soldiers march) as if they were shod with felt; not so silently but that I hear them; yet were it not that I am always listening to their flight, having no infirmity that I had not when I was much younger, I should deceive myself with an imagination that I am still young.

I am fond of writing as an amusement, but do not always find it one. Being rather scantily furnished with subjects that are good for any thing, and corresponding only with those who have no relish for such as are good for nothing, I often find myself reduced to the necessity, the disagreeable necessity, of writing about myself. This does not mend the matter much; for though in a description of my own condition, I discover abundant materials to employ my pen upon, yet as the task is not very agreeable to *me*, so I am sufficiently aware that it is likely to prove irksome to others. A painter who should confine himself in the exercise of his art to the drawing of his own picture, must be a wonderful coxcomb, if he did not soon grow sick of his occupation; and be peculiarly fortunate, if he did not make others as sick as himself.

I have talked more already than I have formerly done in three visits—you remember my taciturnity, never to be forgotten by those who knew me; not to depart entirely from what might be, for aught I know, the most shining part of my character—I here shut my mouth, make my bow, and return to Olney.

W. C.

LETTER CCLXV.

William Cowper, Esq. to the Rev. W. Unwin. Human nature the same in every age.

My dear Friend, August 6, 1780.

You like to hear from me.—This is a very good reason why I should write. But I have nothing to say.—This seems equally a good reason why I should not. Yet if you had alighted from your horse at our door this morning, and at this present writing, being five o'clock in the afternoon, had found occasion to say me,—"Mr. Cowper, you have not spoke since I came in; have you resolved never to speak again?" it would be but a poor reply, if in answer to the summons I should plead inability as my best and only excuse. And this by the way suggests to me a seasonable piece of instruction, and reminds me of what I am very apt to forget, when I have any epistolary business in hand, that a letter may be written upon any thing or nothing, just as that any thing or nothing happens to occur. A man that has a journey before him twenty miles in length, which he is to perform on foot, will not hesitate and doubt whether he shall set out or not, because he does not readily conceive how he shall ever reach the end of it; for he knows, that by the simple operation of moving one foot forward first, and then the other, he shall be sure to accomplish it. So it is in the present case, and so it is in every similar case. A letter is written as a conversation is maintained, or a journey performed, not by preconcerted or premeditated means, a new contrivance, or an invention never heard of before, but merely by maintaining a progress, and resolving as a postillion does, having once set out, never to stop till we reach the appointed end. If a man may talk without thinking, why may he not write upon the same terms? A grave gentleman of the last century, a tie-wig, square-toe, Steinkirk figure, would say, "My good sir, a man has no right to do either." But it is to be hoped that the present century has nothing to do with the mouldy opinions of the last, and so good Sir Launcelot, or Sir Paul, or whatever be your name, step into your picture frame again, and look as if you thought for another century, and leave us moderns in the meantime to think when we can, and to write whether we can or not, else we might as well be dead as you are.

When we look back upon our forefathers, we seem to look back upon the people of another nation, almost upon creatures of another species. Their vast rambling mansions, spacious halls, and painted casements, the Gothic porch smothered with honeysuckles, their little gardens and high walls, their box-edgings, balls of holly, and yew-tree statues, are become so entirely unfashionable now, that we can hardly believe it possible, that a people who resembled us so little in their taste, should resemble us in any thing else. But in every thing else I suppose they were our counterparts exactly; and time, that has sewed up the slashed sleeve, and reduced the large trunk-hose to a neat pair of silk stockings, has left human nature just where it found it. The inside of the man at least has undergone no change. His passions, appetites, and aims are just what they ever were. They wear perhaps a handsomer disguise than they did in days of yore; for philosophy and literature will have their effect upon the exterior; but in every other respect a modern is only an ancient in a different dress.

W. C.

LETTER CCLXVI.

WILLIAM COWPER, ESQ. to MISS COWPER.—Lady Cowper's death.—Thoughts on age.

MY DEAR COUSIN, August 31, 1780.

I am obliged to you for your long letter, which did not seem so, and for your short one, which was more than I had any reason to expect. Short as it was, it conveyed to me two interesting articles of intelligence. An account of your recovering from a fever, and of Lady Cowper's death. The latter was, I suppose, to be expected, for by what remembrance I have of her ladyship, who was never much acquainted with her, she had reached those years that are always found upon the borders of another world. As for you, your time of life is comparatively of a youthful date. You may think of death as much as you please, (you cannot think of it too much,) but I hope you will live to think of it many years.

It costs me not much difficulty to suppose that my friends who were already grown old, when I saw them last, are old still, but it costs me a good deal sometimes to think of those who were at that time young, as being older than they were. Not having been an eye-witness of the change that time has made in them, and my former idea of them not being corrected by observation, it remains the same; my memory presents me with this image unimpaired, and while it retains the resemblance of what they were, forgets that by this time the picture may have lost much of its likeness, through the alteration that succeeding years have made in the original. I know not what impressions time may have made upon your person, for while his claws (as our grannams called them) strike deep furrows in some faces, he seems to sheath them with much tenderness, as if fearful of doing injury to others. But though an enemy to the person, he is a friend to the mind, and you have found him so. Though even in this respect his treatment of us depends upon what he meets with at our hands; if we use him well, and listen to his admonitions, he is a friend indeed, but otherwise the worst of enemies, who takes from us daily something that we valued, and gives us nothing better in its stead. It is well with them who, like you, can stand a tiptoe on the mountain-top of human life, look down with pleasure upon the valley they have passed, and sometimes stretch their wings in joyful hope of a happy flight into eternity. Yet a little while, and your hope will be accomplished.

When you can favour me with a little account of your own family, without inconvenience, I shall be glad to receive it; for though separated from my kindred by little more than half a century of miles, I know as little of their concerns as if oceans and continents were interposed between us.

Yours, my dear cousin,
W. C.

LETTER CCLXVII.

William Cowper, Esq. to Mrs. Newton.

Dear Madam, Oct. 5, 1780.

When a lady speaks, it is not civil to make her wait a week for an answer; I received your letter within this hour, and, foreseeing that the garden will engross much of my time for some days to come, have seized the present opportunity to acknowledge it. I congratulate you on Mr. Newton's safe arrival at Ramsgate, making no doubt but that he reached that place without difficulty or danger, the road thither from Canterbury being so good as to afford room for neither. He has now a view of the element, with which he was once so familiar, but which I think he has not seen for many years. The sight of his old acquaintance will revive in his mind a pleasing recollection of past deliverances, and when he looks at him from the beach, he may say,—" You have formerly given me trouble enough, but I have cast anchor now where your billows can never reach me." It is happy for him that he can say so.

Mrs. Unwin returns you many thanks for your anxiety on her account. Her health is considerably mended upon the whole, so as to afford us a hope that it will be established. Our love attends you.

Yours, dear madam,

W. C.

LETTER CCLXVIII.

William Cowper, Esq. to Rev. John Newton.—On the translation of his "Cardiphonia" into Dutch.

My dear Friend, June 19, 1783.

The translation of your letters into Dutch was news that pleased me much. I intended plain prose, but a rhyme obtruded itself, and I became poetical when I least expected it. When you wrote those letters you did not dream that you were designed for an apostle to the Dutch. Yet so it proves; and such among many others are the advantages we derive from the art of printing: an art in which indisputably man was instructed by the same great teacher who taught him to embroider for the service of the sanctuary, and which amounts almost to as great a blessing as the gift of tongues.

The summer is passing away, and hitherto has hardly been either seen or felt. Perpetual clouds intercept the influence of the sun, and for the most part there is an autumnal coldness in the weather, though we are almost upon the eve of the longest day.

We are well, and always mindful of you; be mindful of us, and assured that we love you.

Yours, my dear friend,
W. C.

LETTER CCLXIX.

William Cowper, Esq. to Rev. John Newton.—Congratulations on his recovery. Character of a simple-minded Christian.

My dear Friend, Sept. 23, 1783.

We are glad that having been attacked by a fever, which has often proved fatal, and almost always leaves the sufferer debilitated to the last degree, you find yourself so soon restored to health, and your strength recovered. Your health and strength are useful to others, and in that view important in His account who dispenses both, and by your means a more precious gift than either. For my own part, though I have not been laid up, I have never been perfectly well since you left us. A smart fever, which lasted indeed but a few hours, succeeded by lassitude and want of spirits, that seemed still to indicate a feverish habit, has made for some time, and still makes me very unfit for my favourite occupations, writing and reading — so that even a letter, and even a letter to you, is not without its burden.

John ——— has had the epidemic, and has it still, but grows better. When he was first seized with it, he gave notice that he should die; but in this only instance of prophetic exertion he seems to have been mistaken: he has however been very near it. I should have told you, that poor John has been very ready to depart, and much comforted through his whole illness. He, you know, though a silent, has been a very steady professor. He, indeed, fights battles, and gains victories, but makes no noise. Europe is not astonished at his feats, foreign academies do not seek him for a member; he will never discover the art of flying, or send a globe of taffeta up to heaven. But he will go thither himself.

LETTER CCLXX.

Dr. Beattie to Dr. Blacklock.

Aberdeen, May 27, 1770.

. . . . . .

I need not tell you how happy I am in the thought, that this work of mine has your approbation; for I know you too well to impute to mere civility the many handsome things you have said in praise of it. I know you approve it, because I know you incapable to say one thing and think another; and I do assure you, I would not forego your approbation to avoid the censure of fifty Mr. Hume's. What do I say? Mr. Hume's censure I am so far from being ashamed of, that I think it does me honour. It is, next to his conversion (which I have no reason to look for,) the most desirable thing I have to expect from that quarter. I have heard, from very good authority, that he speaks of me and my book with very great bitterness; (I own, I thought he would rather have affected to treat both with contempt;) and that he says I have not used him like a gentleman. He is quite right to set the matter upon that footing. It is an odious charge; it is an objection easily remembered, and, for that reason, will be often repeated by his admirers; and it has this further advantage; that being (in the present case) perfectly unintelligible, it cannot possibly be answered. The truth is, I, as a rational, moral, and immortal being, and something of a philosopher, treated him as a rational, moral, and immortal being, a sceptic, and an atheistic writer. My design was, not to make a book full of fashionable phrases and polite expressions, but to undeceive the public in regard to the merits of the sceptical philosophy, and the pretensions of its abettors. To say that I ought not to have done this with plainness and spirit, is to say, in other words, that I ought either to have held my peace, or to have been a knave. In this case, I might, perhaps, have treated Mr. Hume as a gentleman; but I should not have treated society, and my own conscience, as became a man and a Christian. I have all along foreseen, and still foresee, that I shall have many reproaches, and cavils, and sneers to encounter on this occasion; but I am prepared to meet them: I am not ashamed of my cause; and, if I may believe those whose good opinion I value as one of the chief blessings of life, I need not be ashamed of my work. You are certainly right in your conjecture, that it will not have a quick sale. Notwithstanding all my endeavours to render it perspicuous and entertaining, it is still necessary for the person who reads it *to think a little;* a task to which every reader will not submit. My subject too is unpopular, and my principles such as a man of the world would blush to acknowledge. How then can my book be popular? If it refund the expense of its publication, it will do as much as any person, who knows the present state of the literary world, can reasonably expect from it.

LETTER CCLXXI.

REV. RICHARD CECIL to his WIFE.

MY DEAREST LOVE, Little James Street.

We are all led more by our feelings than our judgments, and sometimes even than our duty: and therefore I gratify mine in writing to you, when I should be otherwise employed; and, even though I think it probable I shall deliver the letter myself to-morrow morning: but I have suffered much last night on your account, or rather on my own. Dr. U. said some things last night on the danger of such complaints as yours; and, though it was but general conversation, I began to make something out of it. You know what the cruel ingenuity of the imagination is, so that I lay awake last night; or, I may say, stood on a precipice from which I did not dare to look down, and from which, like a man fixed by enchantment, I could not remove.

You must know how fondly we imagine, that, if we were *present* with a sick friend, they would, somehow or other, be in less danger. This is constantly my feeling, for my anxiety abates when I see you, especially since you seemed to go forward.

I have always felt, that, if I could see my *children* taken to Abraham's bosom—then I should wish you not so much to call it their death as their *escape*—and comfort myself; but I do not feel this respecting *you*. I am too much interested: and always recur to the consideration, "What must *I* do? Whither must I go?"—and this thought so much affects me, that, considering I ought to prepare for public service, I ought not to write nor think any more at present on the subject.

LETTER CCLXXII.

Rev. Richard Cecil to his Wife.

. . . . . .

You cannot think how much I felt in leaving you in that solitary place, so like exile; and though I wish you to stay as long as you feel it necessary for the child, yet I shall be glad to hear that you feel it no longer so. The children are quite well, and our little son has quite forgotten you and me, and the whole world, by reason of a new hoop which he trundles without ceasing. It would be well if new trifles and old ones were confined to children of his age.

I got well soon after I got home; but it was not an unprofitable journey to me; for I had time at Crysal to wind up by reflection.——Life is hurried through in business, and I cannot abstract enough for my soul's health. I advise you, when your attention to the child can be remitted, to use your solitude for the same purpose.

The painters finish to-morrow. I never think of repairing the house we have, but it occurs that we are but covering our coffin, or making a place to die in. Before we shall need another painting, we shall be both of darker hue than the walls we leave. But, perhaps, this is too gloomy a strain to be continued; and, therefore, let me rather say we shall have left a poor clay tenement, too old to repair, for " a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens."

In short, despair and hope are the fundamentals of Christianity—that is, to despair of keeping or repairing that which *must fall*, and to hope for that which *will satisfy and never fail.*

LETTER CCLXXIII.

REV. RICHARD CECIL to his WIFE.

MY DEAR LOVE,

I just scribble a line to say that I am going on in my journey very well. I have also a considerable advantage in travelling with a *man*—for a tender, feeble *lady* could not labour so much. I make him read out *aloud* in the chaise, which he also feels an advantage; so that I travel with Pascal—Adam—Maclaurin—and the Bible. Now I say a *lady* could not afford this.

But, with all these advantages, I am ready to acknowledge, that the want of *your* company makes a terrible void. How many tender things I have lost!—with, now and then a good thing, i. e. a bit of oratory, a scrap of literature, a shred of poetry, and a cup of peculiarities. Some of these peculiarities do not so well please alone; but when *mixed up*, they are not unpleasing to my taste. I assure you I often think of you in the mass as a *character* (and a character you certainly are) that I am delighted with. For, as in a piece of music which we excessively admire, there are, now and then, some grunting minors; yet these, mixed up with sweet returning concords, add greatly to the harmony upon the whole. But do not, from what I say here, put in any more minors than usual—as a little goes a great way!

But now I am so angry at the strain of my mind, that I will write no more. I am quite surprised at myself to reflect (though I have known myself many years too) that, with a weighty concern on my mind, and upon which my heart has sent up many requests, I should be so sportive and gay. But it is my very nature to be gay, as it is some others' to be gloomy; and it brings me into many a snare, and I can only say—" The Lord pardon thy servant in this thing!"

LETTER CCLXXIV.

Rev. Andrew Fuller to a Friend.

. . . . . .

If I have written under too strong feeling, my dear brother, it is not because I suspect your want of kindness, nor in general your want of judgment; but in matters between us and some others, I think you have suffered yourself to be misled by flimsy professions. I should be sorry if any thing I have written should grieve you, or prevent your free remonstrances in future, whenever you think I am getting wrong. If I know a little of your blind side, you know as much or more of mine. I hope we shall get on together, and see reason to love and warn each other as occasion requiries. I wish to shun all strife, but what cannot in justice be avoided.

. . . . . .

A. Fuller.

LETTER CCLXXV.

William Cowper, Esq. to Joseph Hill, Esq. in reply to a friendly offer of pecuniary assistance.

My dear Friend, Olney, June 27, 1772.

I only write to return you thanks for your kind offer—*Agnosco veteris vestigia flammæ.* But I will endeavour to go on without troubling you. Excuse an expression that dishonours your friendship; I should rather say, it would be a trouble to myself, and I know you will be generous enough to give me credit for the assertion. I had rather want many things, any thing, indeed, that this world could afford me, than abuse the affection of a friend. I suppose you are sometimes troubled upon my account. But you need not. I have no doubt it will be seen, when my days are closed, that I served a Master who would not suffer me to want any thing that was good for me. He said to Jacob, "I will surely do thee good;" and this he said, not for his sake only, but for ours also, if we trust in Him. This thought relieves me from the greatest part of the distress I should else suffer in my present circumstances, and enables me to sit down peacefully upon the wreck of my fortune.

Yours ever, my dear friend,

W. C.

LETTER CCLXXVI.

WILLIAM COWPER, ESQ. to MRS. NEWTON, written shortly after his friend's removal from Olney.

DEAR MADAM, Olney, March 4, 1780.

To communicate surprise is almost, perhaps quite, as agreeable as to receive it. This is my present motive for writing to you rather than to Mr. Newton. He would be pleased with hearing from me, but he would not be surprised at it; you see, therefore, I am selfish on the present occasion, and principally consult my own gratification. Indeed, if I consulted yours, I should be silent; for I have no such budget as the minister's, furnished and stuffed with ways and means for every emergency, and shall find it difficult, perhaps, to raise supplies even for a short espistle. You have observed in common conversation, that the man who coughs the oftenest, (I mean if he has not a cold,) does it because he has nothing to say. Even so it is in letter-writing: a long preface, such as mine, is an ugly symptom, and always forebodes great sterility in the following pages.

The vicarage-house became a melancholy object as soon as Mr. Newton had left it; when you left it, it became more melancholy: now it is actually occupied by another family, even *I* cannot look at it without being shocked. As I walked in the garden this evening, I saw the smoke issue from the study-chimney, and said to myself, That used to be a sign that Mr. Newton was there; but it is so no longer. The walls of the house know nothing of the change that has taken place; the bolt of the chamber-door sounds just as it used to do; and when Mr. P—— goes up stairs, for aught I know, or ever shall know, the fall of his foot could hardly, perhaps, be distinguished from that of Mr. Newton. But Mr. Newton's foot will never be heard upon that staircase again. These reflections, and such as these, occurred to me upon the occasion.

. . . . . .

If I were in a condition to leave Olney too, I certainly would not stay in it. It is no attachment to the place that binds me here, but an unfitness for every other. I lived in it once, but now I am buried in it, and have no business with the world on the outside of my sepulchre; my appearance would startle them, and theirs would be shocking to me.

Such are my thoughts about the matter. Others are more deeply affected, and by more weighty considerations, having been many years the object of a ministry which they had reason to account themselves happy in the possession of.

. . . . . .

We were concerned at your account of Robert, and have little doubt but he will shuffle himself out of his place. When he will find another is a question not to be resolved by those who recommend him to this. I wrote him a long letter a day or two after the receipt of yours, but I am afraid it was only clapping a blister upon the crown of a wig-block.

My respects attend Mr. Newton and yourself, accompanied with much affection for you both,

Yours, dear madam,

W. C.

LETTER CCLXXVII.

William Cowper, Esq. to Rev. John Newton.

References to Mr. Newton's history.

My dear Friend, Olney, May 28, 1781.

I am much obliged to you for the pains you have taken with my "Table Talk," and wish that my *vivâ voce* table talk could repay you for the trouble you have had with the written one.

The season is wonderfully improved within this day or two; and if these cloudless skies are continued to us, or rather, if the cold winds do not set in again, promises you a pleasant excursion, as far, at least, as the weather can conduce to make it such. You seldom complain of too much sunshine, and if you are prepared for a heat somewhat like that of Africa, the south walk in our long garden will exactly suit you. Reflected from the gravel and from the walls, and beating upon your head at the same time, it may possibly make you wish you could enjoy for an hour or two that immensity of shade afforded by the gigantic trees still growing in the land of your captivity. If you could spend a day now and then in those forests, and return with a wish to England, it would be no small addition to the number of your pleasures. But *pennæ non homini datæ.* The time will come, perhaps, (but death will come first,) when you will be able to visit them without either danger, trouble, or expense; and when the contemplation of those well-remembered scenes will awaken your emotions of gratitude and praise, surpassing all you could possibly sustain at present. In this sense, I suppose, there is a heaven upon earth at all times, and that the disembodied spirit may find a peculiar joy, arising from the contemplation of those places it was formerly conversant with, and so far, at least, be reconciled to a world it was once so weary of, as to use it in the delightful way of thankful reflection.

Miss Catlett must not think of any other lodging than we can, without any inconvenience, as we shall with all possible pleasure, furnish her with. We can each of us say—that is, I can say it in Latin and Mrs. Unwin in English—*Nihil tui à me alienum puto.*

Having two more letters to write, I find myself obliged to shorten this; so, once more wishing you a good journey, and ourselves the happiness of receiving you in good health and spirits,

I remain, affectionately yours,

W. C.

LETTER CCLXXVIII.

William Cowper, Esq. to Rev. John Newton. His motives and feelings in writing his works.

My dear Friend, Olney, August 6, 1785.

I found your account of what you experienced in your state of maiden authorship very entertaining, because very natural. I suppose that no man ever made his first sally from the press without a conviction that all eyes and ears would be engaged to attend him, at least without a thousand anxieties lest they should not. But, however arduous and interesting such an enterprise may be in the first instance, it seems to me that our feelings on the occasion soon become obtuse. I can answer at least for one. Mine are by no means what they were when I published my first volume. I am even so indifferent to the matter, that I can truly assert myself guiltless of the very idea of my book sometimes whole days together. God knows that, my mind having been occupied more than twelve years in the contemplation of the most distressing subjects, the world, and its opinions of what I write, is become as unimportant to me as the whistling of a bird in a bush. Despair made amusement necessary, and I found poetry the most agreeable amusement. Had I not endeavoured to perform my best, it would not have amused me at all. The mere blotting of so much paper would have been but indifferent sport. God gave me grace also to wish that I might not write in vain. Accordingly I have mingled much truth with much trifle; and such truths as deserved at least to be clad as well and as handsomely as I could clothe them. If the world approve me not, so much the worse for them, but not for me. I have only endeavoured to serve them, and the loss will be their own. And as to their commendations, if I should chance to win them, I feel myself equally invulnerable there. The view that I have had of myself, for many years, has been so truly humiliating, that I think the praises of all mankind could not hurt me. God knows that I speak my present sense of the matter at least most truly, when I say that the admiration of creatures like myself seems to me a weapon the least dangerous that my worst enemy could employ against me. I am fortified against it by such solidity of real self-abasement, that I deceive myself most egregiously if I do not heartily despise it. Praise belongeth to God; and I seem to myself to covet it no more than I covet divine honours. Could I assuredly hope that God would at last deliver me, I should have reason to thank him for all that I have suffered, were it only for the sake of this single fruit of my affliction—that it has taught me how much more contemptible I am in myself than I ever before suspected, and has reduced my former share of self-knowledge (of which I had at that time a tolerably good opinion) to a mere nullity, in comparison with what I have acquired since. Self is a subject of inscrutable misery and mischief, and can never be studied to so much advantage as in the dark; for as the bright beams of the sun seem to impart a beauty to the foulest objects, and can make even a dunghill smile; so the light of God's countenance, vouchsafed to a fallen creature, so sweetens him and softens him for the time, that he seems, both to others and to himself, to have nothing savage or sordid about him. *But the heart is a nest of serpents, and will be such whilst it continues to beat. If God cover the mouth of that nest with his hand, they are hush and snug; but if He withdraw his hand, the whole family lift up their heads and hiss, are as active and venomous as ever.* This I always professed to believe from the time that I had embraced the truth, but never knew it as I know it now. To what end I have been made to know it as I do—whether for the benefit of others, or for my own, or for both, or for neither, will appear hereafter.

What I have written leads me naturally to the mention of a matter that I had forgot. I should blame nobody, not even my intimate friends, and those who have the most favourable opinion of me, where they to charge the publication of John Gilpin, at the end of so much solemn and serious truth, to the score of the author's vanity; and to suspect that, however sober I may be upon proper occasions, I have yet that itch of popularity that would not suffer me to sink my title to a jest that had been so successful. But the case is not such. When I sent the copy of "The Task" to Johnson, I desired, indeed, Mr. Unwin to ask him, the question whether or not he would choose to make it a part of the volume? This I did merely with a view to promote the sale of it. Johnson answered, "By all means." Some months afterwards he enclosed a note to me in one of my packets, in which he expressed a change of mind, alleging, that to print John Gilpin would only be to print what had been hackneyed in every magazine, in every shop, and at the corner of every street. I answered that I desired to be entirely governed by his opinion; and that if he chose to wave it, I should be better pleased with the omission. Nothing more passed between us on the subject, and I concluded that I should never have the immortal honour of being generally known as the author of John Gilpin. In the last packet, however, down came John, very fairly printed, and equipped for public appearance. The business having taken this turn, I concluded that Johnson had adopted my original thought, that it might prove advantageous to the sale; and as he had had the trouble and expense of printing it, I corrected the copy, and let it pass. Perhaps, however, neither the book, nor the writer may be made much more famous by John's good company than they would have been without it; for the volume has never yet been advertised, nor can I learn that Johnson intends it. He fears the expense, and the consequence must be prejudicial. Many who would purchase will remain uninformed; but I am perfectly content.

I have considered your motto, and like the purport of it; but the best, because the most laconic manner of it seems to be this—

Cùm talis sis, sis noster;

utinam being, in my account of it, unnecessary.

Yours, my dear friend, most truly,
W. C.

LETTER CCLXXIX.

William Cowper, Esq. to Mrs. King.

Dear Madam, Weston Lodge, Feb. 12, 1788.

A letter from a lady who was once intimate with my brother could not fail of being most acceptable to me. I lost him just in the moment when those truths which have recommended my volumes to your approbation were become his daily sustenance, as they had long been mine. But the will of God was done. I have sometimes thought, that had life been spared, being made brothers by a stricter tie than ever in the bonds of the same faith, hope, and love, we should have been happier in each other than it was in the power of mere natural affection to make us. But it was his blessing to be taken from a world in which he had no longer any wish to continue, and it will be mine, if, while I dwell in it, my time may not be altogether wasted. In order to effect that good end, I wrote what I am happy to find it has given you pleasure to read. But for that pleasure, madam, you are indebted neither to me, nor to my muse; but (as you are well aware) to Him who alone can make divine truths palatable in whatever vehicle conveyed. It is an established philosophical axiom, that nothing can communicate what it has not in itself; but, in the effects of Christian communion, a very strông exception is found to this general rule, however self-evident it may seem. A man himself destitute of all spiritual consolation may, by occasion, impart it to others. Thus I, it seems, who wrote those very poems to amuse a mind oppressed with melancholy, and who have myself derived from them no other benefit, (for mere success in authorship will do me no good,) have nevertheless, by so doing, comforted others, at the same time that they adminster me no consolation. But I will proceed no further in this strain, lest my prose should damp a pleasure that my verse has happily excited. On the contrary, I will endeavour to rejoice in your joy, and especially because I have been myself the instrument of conveying it.

Since the receipt of your obliging letter, I have naturally had recourse to my recollection, to try if it would furnish me with the name that I find at the bottom of it. At the same time I am aware that there is nothing more probable than that my brother might be honoured with your friendship without mentioning it to me; for, except a very short period before his death, we lived necessarily at a considerable distance from each other. Ascribe it, madam, not to an impertinent curiosity, but to a desire of better acquaintance with you, if I take the liberty to ask, (since ladies' names, at least, are changeable,) whether yours was at that time the same as now.

Sincerely wishing you all happiness, and especially that which I am sure you covet most, the happiness which is from above, I remain, dear madam, early as it may seem to say it,

Affectionately yours,

W. C.

LETTER CCLXXX.

Rev. Robert Hall to Mrs. Tucker.

Dear Madam, Leicester, April 16, 1819.

I feel much gratified and honoured by your kind and affectionate expressions of remembrance of an old friend; who, though long detained by circumstances from personal intercourse and correspondence, will never hear the name of Mrs. Tucker with indifference. I am delighted to hear from you; and to learn, that, with all the changes effected by time, to which you so affectingly allude, the ardour of mind and warmth of sensibility, by which you were formerly distinguished, remain unimpaired. How wonderful, how complicated, the mazes of providence through which we are conducted in our pilgrimage to eternity!

Could we foresee the trials which await us, the agonies and vicissitudes we are called to pass through, life would be insupportable; but we are led, like the blind, by a way that we know not; and strength is dealt out just in proportion to our day. Let us, my dear friend, look forward, and remember that our salvation is nearer than when we first believed. Let us hope that the fiercest part of our mortal warfare is passed, and that the evening of life will be more tranquil than the morning and the noon. May our deep experience of the mutability and vanity of the present shadowy state be improved into a perpetual motive for cultivating that heavenly-mindedness which is the only effectual antidote to the miseries of life. With respect to my visiting Plymouth I have heard nothing of it from any quarter; . . . . should my steps be directed thither at any time during your life, I shall never for a moment think of taking my abode but at your house, with your permission, should I be invited by a prince. You little know me, if you suppose that rank and fashion would have the smallest influence in inducing a forgetfulness of ancient friendship. My chief inducement to visit Plymouth would be the pleasure of once more seeing and conversing with Mrs. Tucker. With my kindest remembrances to Mr. Tucker, I remain,

Dear madam,

Your affectionate friend,

ROBERT HALL.

LETTER CCLXXXI.

Henry Kirke White to Mr. Benjamin Maddock, whom he hoped to have as a friend and fellow-student at Cambridge. Written in his nineteenth year.

My dear Ben, Winteringham, Aug. 3, 1804.

I am all anxiety to learn the issue of your proposal to your father. Surely it will proceed; surely a plan laid out with such fair prospects of happiness to you, as well as me, will not be frustrated. Write to me the moment you have any information on the subject.

I think we shall be happy together at Cambridge; and in the ardent pursuit of Christian knowledge, and Christian virtue, we shall be doubly united. We were before friends; now, I hope, likely to be still more emphatically so. But I must not anticipate.

I left Nottingham without seeing my brother Neville, who arrived there two days after me. This is a circumstance which I much regret; but I hope he will come this way when he goes, according to his intention, to a watering-place. Neville has been a good brother to me, and there are not many things which would give me more pleasure than, after so long a separation, to see him again. I dare not hope that I shall meet you and him together, in October, at Nottingham.

My days flow on here in an even tenor. They are, indeed, studious days, for my studies seem to multiply on my hands, and I am so much occupied with them, that I am becoming a mere bookworm, running over the rules of Greek versification in my walks, instead of expatiating on the beauties of the surrounding scenery. Winteringham is, indeed, now a delightful place: the trees are in full verdure, the flocks are browsing the fields, and my former walks are become dry under foot, which I have never known them to be before. The opening vista, from our church-yard over the Humber, to the hills, and receding vales of Yorkshire, assumes a thousand new aspects. I sometimes watch it at evening, when the sun is just gilding the summits of the hills, and the lowlands are beginning to take a browner hue. The showers partially falling in the distance, while all is serene above me; the swelling sail rapidly falling down the river; and, not least of all, the villages, woods, and villas on the opposite bank, sometimes render this scene quite enchanting to me; and it is no contemptible relaxation, after a man has been puzzling his brains over the intricacies of Greek choruses all the day, to come out and unbend his mind with careless thought and negligent fancies, while he refreshes his body with the fresh air of the country.

I wish you to have a taste of these pleasures with me; and if ever I should live to be blessed with a quiet parsonage, and that great object of my ambition, a garden, I have no doubt but we shall be, for some short intervals, at least, two quiet contented bodies. These will be our relaxations; our *business* will be of a nobler kind. Let us vigilantly fortify ourselves against the exigencies of the serious appointment we are, with God's blessing, to fulfil; and if we go into the church prepared to do our duty, there is every reasonable prospect that our labours will be blessed, and that we shall be blessed in them. As your habits generally have been averse to what is called *close* application, it will be too much for your strength, as well as unadvisable in other points of view, to study very intensely; but regularly you may, and must read; and depend upon it, a man will work more wonders by stated and constant application, than by unnatural and forced endeavours.

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LETTER CCLXXXII.

Henry Kirke White to Mr. Benjamin Maddock.—Written while preparing for the University. Hints to students.

Dear Ben, Winteringham, Jan. 31, 1805.

I have long been convinced of the truth of what you say; respecting the effects of close reading on a man's mind, in a religious point of view, and I am more and more convinced that literature is very rarely the source of satisfaction of mind to a Christian. I would wish you to steer clear of too abstracted and subtle a mode of thinking and reasoning, and you will so be happier than your friend.

A relish for books will be a sweet source of amusement, and a salutary relaxation to you throughout life; but let it not be more than a *relish*, if *you* value your own peace. I think, however, that you ought to strengthen your mind a little with logic, and for this purpose I would advise you to go through Euclid with sedulous and serious attention, and likewise to read Duncan through. You are too desultory a reader, and regard *amusement* too much: if you wish your reading in good earnest to *amuse* you when you are old, as well as now in your youth, you will take care to form a taste for substantial and sound authors, and will not be the less eager to study a work because it requires a little labour to understand it.

After you have read Euclid, and amused yourself with Locke's sublime speculations, you will derive much pleasure from Butler's Analogy, without exception the most unanswerable demonstration of the folly of infidelity that the world ever saw.

Books like these will give you more strength of mind, and consistent firmness, than either you or I now possess; while, on the other hand, the effeminate *panada* of magazines, tales, and the tribe of penny-catching pamphlets, of which desultory readers are so fond, only tend to enervate the mind, and incapacitate it for every species of manly exertion.

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I continue to be in better health, although the weather is a great obstacle to my taking a proper proportion of exercise. I have had a trip to Hull of late, and saw the famous painter R—— there, with whom I had a good deal of talk. He is a pious man, and a great astronomer; but in manners and appearance, a complete artist. I rather think he is inclined to Hutchinsonian principles, and entertains no great reverence for Sir Isaac Newton.

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LETTER CCLXXXIII.

HENRY KIRKE WHITE to MR. BENJAMIN MADDOCK.—Written shortly after he went to Cambridge.

St. John's College, Cambridge, Nov. 10, 1805.

MY DEAR BEN,

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The reasons why I said mathematical studies did not agree with me, were these—that I am more inclined to classical pursuits, and that, considering what disadvantages I lie under in being deaf, I am afraid I cannot excel in them. I have at present entirely laid them aside, as I am reading for the university scholarship, which will soon be vacant: there are expected to be thirteen or fourteen candidates, some of whom are of great note from Eton; and I have as much expectation of gaining it, as of being elected supreme magus over the mysteries of Mithra. The scholarship is of no value in itself adequate to the labour of reading for it, but it is the greatest classical honour in the university, and is a pretty sure road to a fellowship. My classical abilities here have attracted some attention, and my Latin Themes, in particular, have drawn forth enquiries from the tutors as to the place of my education. The reason why I have determined to sit for the scholarship is this, that to have simply been a candidate for it, establishes a man's character, as many of the first classics in the university have failed of it.

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I begin now to feel at home in my little room, and I wish you were here to see how snugly I sit by my blazing fire in the cold evenings. College certainly has charms, though I have a few things rankling at my heart which will not let me be quite happy.—*Ora, Ora, pro me.*

This last sentence of mine is of a very curious tendency to be sure; for who is there of mortals who has *not* something rankling at his heart, which will not let him be happy?

It is curious to observe the different estimations two men make of one another's happiness. Each of them surveys the external appearance of the other's situation, and, comparing them with the secret disquieting circumstances of his own, thinks him happier; and so it is that all the world over, be we favoured as we may, there is always something which others have, and which we ourselves have not, necessary to the completion of our felicity. I think, therefore, upon the whole, there is no such thing as positive happiness in this world;

and a man can only be deemed felicitous, as he is in comparison less affected with positive evil. It is our business, therefore, to support ourselves under existing ills, with the anticipation of future blessings. Life, with all its bitters, is a draught soon drunk; and though we have many changes to fear on this side the grave, beyond it we know of none.

Your life and mine are now marked out; and our calling is of such a nature, that it ill becomes us to be too much affected with circumstances of an external nature. It is our duty to bear our evils with dignified silence. Considering our superior consolations, they are small in comparison with those of others: and though they *may* cast a sadness both over our hearts and countenances, which time may not easily remove, yet they must not interfere with our active duties, nor affect our conduct towards others, except by opening our heart with warmer sympathy to their woes, their wants, and miseries.

As you have begun in your religious path, my beloved friend, persevere. Let your love to the Crucified continue as pure as it was at first, while your zeal is more tempered, and your piety more rational and mature. I hope yet to live to see you a pious and respected parish priest: as for me —I hope I shall do my duty as I have strength and ability; and I hope I shall always continue, what I now profess myself,

Your friend and brother,
H. K. WHITE.

LETTER CCLXXXIV.

HENRY KIRKE WHITE to MR. BENJAMIN MADDOCK.—
State of his health.

DEAR BEN, St. John's, February 17, 1806.

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Do not think I am reading hard: I believe it is all over with that. I have had a recurrence of my old complaint within this last four or five days, which has half unnerved me for every thing. The state of my health is really miserable; I am well and lively in the morning, and overwhelmed with nervous horrors in the evening. I do not know how to proceed with regard to my studies—a very slight over-stretch of the mind in the day-time, occasions me not only a sleepless night, but a night of *gloom* and horror. The systole and diastole of my heart seem to be playing at ball—the stake, my life. I can only say the game is not yet decided. I allude to the violence of the palpitation.

I am going to mount the Gog-magog hills this morning, in quest of a good night's sleep. The Gog-magog hills for my body, and the Bible for my mind, are my only medicines. I am sorry to say, that neither are quite adequate. *Cui, igitur; dandum est vitio? Mihi prorsus.* I hope, as the summer comes, my spirits (which have been with the swallows a winter's journey) will come with it. When my spirits are restored, my health will be restored—the *fons mali* lies there. Give me serenity and equability of mind, and all will be well there. . . . . . .

LETTER CCLXXXV.

HENRY KIRKE WHITE to his MOTHER.—Filial affection.

DEAR MOTHER, St. John's, Cambridge, April, 1816.

. . . .

I am quite unhappy to see you so anxious on my account, and also that you should think me neglectful of you. Believe me, my dear mother, my thoughts are often with you. Never do I lay myself on my bed, before you have all passed before me in my prayers; and one of my first earthly wishes is to make you comfortable, and provide that rest and quiet for your mind which you so much need: and never fear but I shall have it in my power some time or other. My prospects wear a flattering appearance. I shall be almost sure of a fellowship somewhere or other; and then, if I get a curacy in Cambridge, I shall have a clear income of £170 per annum, besides my board and lodging, perhaps more. If I do not reside in Cambridge, I shall have some quiet parsonage, where you may come and spend the summer months. Maria and Kate will then be older, and you will be less missed. On all accounts *you* have much reason to indulge happier dreams. My health is considerably better. Only do you take as much care of yours as I do of mine, and all will be well.

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LETTER CCLXXXVI.

Henry Kirke White to Mr. Benjamin Maddock.—
His severe illness and its happy religious effects.

My dear Friend, St. John's, July 9, 1806.

I have good and very bad news to communicate to you. Good, that Mr. Catton has given me an exhibition, which makes me up a clear income of 63*l.* per annum, and that I am consequently more than independent; bad, that I have been very ill, notwithstanding regular and steady exercise. Last Saturday morning I rose early, and got up some rather abstruse problems in mechanics for my tutor, spent an hour with him, between eight and nine got my breakfast, and read the Greek History (at breakfast) till ten; then sat down to decipher some logarithm tables. I think I had not done any thing at them, when I lost myself. At a quarter past eleven my laundress found me bleeding in four different places in my face and head, and insensible. I got up and staggered about the room, and she, being frightened, ran away, and told my gyp to fetch a surgeon. Before he came, I was sallying out with my flannel gown on, and my academical gown over it: he made me put on my coat, and then I went to Mr. Farish's: he opened a vein, and my recollection returned. My own idea was, that I had fallen out of bed, and so I told Mr. Farish at first; but I afterwards remembered that I had been to Mr. Fiske, and breakfasted.

Mr. Catton has insisted on my consulting Sir Isaac Pennington; and the consequence is, that I am to go through a course of blistering, &c. which, after the bleeding, will leave me weak enough.

I am, however, very well, except as regards the doctors; and yesterday I drove into the country to Saffron Walden in a gig. My tongue is in a bad condition, from a bite which I gave it either in my fall, or in the moments of convulsion. My nose has also come badly off. I believe I fell against my reading desk. My other wounds are only rubs and scratches on the carpet.

I am ordered to remit my studies for a while, by the common advice both of doctors and tutors. Dr. Pennington hopes to prevent any recurrence of the fit. He thinks it looks towards epilepsy, of the horrors of which malady I have a very full and precise idea; and I only pray that God will spare me as respects my faculties, however else it may seem good to him to afflict me. Were I my own master, I know how I should act; but I am tied here by bands which I cannot burst. I know that change of place is needful; but I must not indulge in the idea. The college must not pay my tutor for nothing. Dr. Pennington and Mr. Farish attribute the attack to a too continued tension of the faculties. As I am much alone now, I never get quite off study, and I think incessantly. I know nature will not endure this. They both proposed my going home, but Mr. —— did not hint at it, although much concerned; and, indeed, I know home would be a bad place for me in my present situation. I look round for a resting-place, and I find none. Yet there is one, which I have long too, too much disregarded, and thither I must now betake myself. There are many situations worse than mine, and I have no business to complain. If these afflictions should draw the bonds tighter which hold me to my Redeemer, it will be well.

You may be assured that you have here a plain statement of my case, in its true colours, without any palliation. I am now well again, and have only to fear a relapse, which I shall do all I can to prevent, by a relaxation in study.

I have now written too much.

I am, very sincerely, yours,
H. K. White.

LETTER CCLXXXVII.

Henry Kirke White to Mr. Benjamin Maddock. — On the same subject.

My dear Ben, St. John's, Sept. 14, 1806.

I can scarcely write more to you now than just to calm your uneasiness on my account. I am perfectly well again, and have experienced no recurrence of the fit; my spirits too are better, and I read very moderately. I hope that God will be pleased to spare his rebellious child; this stroke has brought me nearer to him: whom indeed have I for my comforter but Him?

I am still reading, but with moderation, as I have been during the whole vacation, whatever you may persist in thinking.

My heart turns with more fondness towards the consolations of religion than it did, and in some degree I have found consolation. I still, however, conceive that it is my duty to pursue my studies temperately, and to fortify myself with Christian resignation and calmness for the worst. I am much wanting in these virtues, and, indeed, in all Christian virtues; but I know how desirable they are, and I long for them. Pray that I may be strengthened and enlightened, and that I may be enabled to go where duty bids, wherever that be.

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LETTER CCLXXXVIII.

HENRY KIRKE WHITE to Mr. R. W. A——.

DEAR A——, St. John's, Aug. 18, 1806.

I am glad to hear of your voyages and travels through various regions, and various seas, both of this island, and its little suckling, the Isle of Wight.

Many hair's-breadth escapes and perilous adventures you must needs have had, and many a time, on the extreme shores of the south, must you have looked up with the eye of intelligent curiosity, to see whether the same moon shone there as in the pleasant, but now far distant groves of Colwick. And now, my very wise and travelled friend, seeing that your head is yet upon your shoulders, and your neck in its right natural position, and seeing that, after all the changes and chances of a long journey, and after being banged from post to pillar, and from pillar to post; seeing, I say, that after all this, you are safely housed once more under your paternal roof, what think you, if you were to indulge your mind as much as you have done your eyes and gaping muscles? A few trips to the fountains of light and colour, or to the regions of the good lady who *χερσὶν ἀδάλοις δίεπει ἀφοῤῥον πόντον*, a ramble down the Galaxy, and a few peeps on the *unconfined* confines (*ποτμὸν ἄποτμον, ὕπνον ἄυπνον, βιον ϗ βιώτοναλ*) of infinite space, would prove, perhaps, as delectable to your immaterial part, as the delicious see-saw of a post-chaise was to your corporeal; or, if these ætherial, aëronautical, mathematical volutations should displease you, perhaps it would not be amiss to saunter a few weeks on the site of Troy, or to lay out plans of ancient history on the debatable ground of the Peloponnesians and Athenians. There is one Thucydides, who lives near, who will tell you all about the places you visit, and the great events connected with them: he is a sententious old fellow, very shrewd in his remarks, and speaks, moreover, very excellent Greek at your service. I know not whether you have met with any guide in the course of your bodily travels who can be compared to him. If you should make Rome in your way, either there or back, I should like to give you a letter of introduction to an old friend of mine, whose name is Livy, who, as far as his memory extends, will amuse you with pretty stories, and some true history. There is another honest fellow enough, to whom I dare not recommend you, he is so very crabbed and tart, and speaks so much in epigrams and enigmas, that I am afraid he would teach you to talk as unintelligibly as himself. I do not mean to give you any more advice, but I have one exhortation, which I hope you will take in good part; it is this, that if you set out on this journey, you would please to proceed to its end: for I have been acquainted with some young men, who have turned their faces towards Athens or Rome, and trudged on manfully for a few miles, but when they had travelled till they grew weary, and worn out a good pair of shoes, have suddenly become disheartened, and returned without any recompense for their pains.

And now let me assume a more serious strain, and exhort you to cultivate your mind with the utmost assiduity. You are at a critical period of your life, and the habits which you now form will, most probably, adhere to you through life. If they be idle habits, I am sure they will.

But even the cultivation of your mind is of minor importance to that of your heart, your temper, and disposition. Here I have need not to preach, but to learn. You have had less to encounter in your religious progress than I have, and your progress has been therefore greater, greater even than your superior faculties would have warranted. I have had to fight hard with vanity at home, and applause abroad; no wonder that my vessel has been tossed about, but greater wonder that it is yet upon the waves. I exhort you to pray with me, (and I entreat you to pray for me,) that we may both weather out the storm, and arrive in the haven of sound tranquillity, even on this side the grave.

We have all particular reason to watch and pray, lest self too much predominate. We should accustom ourselves to hold our own comforts and conveniences as subordinate to the comforts and conveniences of others in all other things; and a habit thus begun in little matters, might probably be extended without difficulty to those of a higher nature.

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LETTER CCLXXXIX.

MRS. NEWELL to MISS F. W—— of Beverley.

Haverhill, Dec. 13, 1811.

I have long been wishing for a favourable opportunity to return my thanks to my dear Miss W—— for her affectionate letter received last June. A multiplicity of avocations, which could not possibly be dispensed with, have deprived me of this pleasure till now. But though my friends have been neglected, they have not been forgotten. Oh no! dear to my heart are the friends of Immanuel: particularly those with whom I have walked to the house of God in company, and with whom I have taken sweet counsel about the things which immediately concern Zion, the city of our God. These dear Christian friends, will retain a lasting and affectionate remembrance in my heart, even though stormy oceans should separate me from them. There is a world, my sister, beyond this mortal state, where souls, cemented in one common union, will dwell together, and never more be separated. Does not your heart burn within you, when in humble anticipation of future blessedness, you engage in the delightful service of your covenant Redeemer? When your spirit sinks within you, and all terrestrial objects lose their power to please, can you not say,

> My journey here,
> Though it be darksome, joyless, aud forlorn,
> Is yet but short; and soon my weary feet
> Shall greet the peaceful inn of lasting rest:—
> The toils of this short life will soon be over.

LETTER CCXC.

Mrs. Newell to Miss S. H—— of Andover. Written on her departure for India.

Haverhill, Feb. 3, 1812.

The long expected hour is at length arrived, and I am called to bid an eternal adieu to the dear land of my nativity, and enter upon a life replete with crosses, privations, and hardships. The conflicting emotions which rend my heart, imagination will point out to my dear Miss H—— better than my pen can describe them. But still peace reigns many an hour within. Consolations are mine, more valuable than ten thousand worlds. My Saviour, my Sanctifier, my Redeemer, is still lovely; his comforts will delight my soul. Think of Harriet, when crossing the stormy ocean—think of her, when wandering over Hindostan's sultry plains. Farewell, my friend, a last, a long farewell.

May we meet in yonder world, "where adieus and farewells are a sound unknown!"

LETTER CCXCI.

Mrs. Newell to a Friend. Written during her voyage to India.

My dear Mrs. K——, April 14, 1812.

Most sensibly do I feel the loss of the society of my Christian friends in Haverhill, with whom I often took sweet counsel. How repeatedly have I commemorated the death of the blessed Jesus at his table, with my sister and friend, my ever dear Mrs. K——. The ties are still strong which attach my heart to her; and though I no more anticipate another meeting with her on earth, yet I hope to sit with her at the gospel feast in heaven, where all parting tears will be wiped away. Two months this day since I left my native shores, and became a resident of this floating prison. The change has been great indeed which the last months have effected in my situation. Many have been the inconveniences and privations to which I have been subjected. I have relinquished a life of ease and tranquillity, in the bosom of my relatives and friends, for the hardships of a voyage across the Atlantic, and a habitation in an unhealthy clime, among the heathens. But I am far from being unhappy. I have found many valuable sources of enjoyment, and I believe I can say, in the sincerity of my heart, that notwithstanding my separation from every object which once I loved, yet I never was happier, or more contented in my life. In one bosom friend I find the endearing qualities of a parent, a brother, and a husband all united. This sympathy alleviates every sorrow; his prayers diffuse joy and consolation through my heart; and while he lessens my earthly griefs, he points me to that world, where the weary are at rest.

LETTER CCXCII.

MRS. SUSAN HUNTINGTON, two months after the death of her husband, to a friend at N— H—, who had lost a near relation.

Boston, November 14, 1819.

Your long and confidential letter gave me great pleasure. There is a sympathy in the feeling of persons who have been recently afflicted, which cannot be expected to be found in others; a mutual chord, which, touched, vibrates with a kindred sound. We have not suffered exactly alike; but we have suffered; and that circumstance has made us love each other better than we did before.

But, my dear friend, in our recent trials, neither of us have been called to suffer as those who have no hope. And how does the reflection, that our departed friends have now reached the point which we must reach before we can be happy, sweeten and soothe the anguish of the separation! Let us contemplate them in every supposable view, and the prospect is full of consolation. We cannot think of them as what they were, or what they are, without pleasure. They are the highly favoured of the Lord, who, having finished all they had to do in this vale of tears, are admitted to the higher services of the upper temple. True, when we look at our loss, nature will feel. This is allowable, is becoming. When I view myself, riven asunder, root and branch, not the limbs torn away, but the very body of the tree sundered from top to bottom, nature must feel the parting agonies, must, at times, be ready to sink under the consciousness of her dissolution. All this must be, to those who have interest to be smitten, friendships to be broken, and hearts to feel.

Yes, dear E——, our hearts have bled. The wound inflicted has been deep. We have felt that the stroke was full of anguish, that it went to our very souls. We will not deny that this is all true. We will not please ourselves with the delusion that the deep, deep wound which the hand of God has inflicted, can ever cease to bleed. But, O my friend! "is there not balm in Gilead? is there not a physician there?" Is not that physician our Saviour; wise to discern, prudent to manage, strong to save? Has not the kind hand which smote so deeply, accompanied the stroke with many softening, mitigating circumstances? O yes; I trust we both feel that it is so. It is God who hath afflicted us, the infinitely wise, compassionate, and faithful Jehovah, the Lord our God. And does it not argue great want of confidence in him, if we sink into despondency when he chastises us? Does it not show, either that we think we could manage things better than he can, or that there is something which we have not cordially submitted to his disposal?

And now, O God, thou art the potter, and we the clay. O how this quells the murmurings of self-will; how it settles the restlessness of the troubled spirit; how it plucks the sting from the rod of affliction! God knows best. Precious truth! It is as an anchor to the soul, sure and steadfast, which keeps it from shipwreck, amidst all the storms and tempests of the troubled sea of life. Oh, for a firm, unwavering faith! This is all that is wanting. With this we may say,

Cheerful I tread the desert through.

With this we may rejoice, when our beloved friends are taken from the stormy ocean to the peaceful port, from the weary wilderness to the happy home, from the field of conflict to the crown of victory; and trace, with holy courage, our way through the same difficulties to the same glorious recompence of reward. But, ah! this, a firm unwavering faith, is too often wanting. We miss our temporal comforts. The heart which sympathized in all our pleasures and pains has ceased to beat; the ear which was always open to listen to our complaints and wishes is closed; the kind voice of affection and disinterested love is hushed; the arm which supported us is withdrawn. It is a shilling thought. Cherished alone, we feel its freezing, benumbing influence fastening upon all the springs of comfort and hope, and turning every stream of joy into one waste of cold and motionless despair.

But, my dear friend, we must not view our trials thus. We must think much and often of the blessedness of those whose removal we lament, of the perfection of the divine government, of the certainty of the promise, that "all things shall work together for good to them that love God," of the rapid approach of that hour which will unite us eternally to those in Christ whom we love, of the danger of creature-comforts, and of the suffering life on earth of our glorious High-priest and head, and his assurance that it is through much tribulation we must enter the kingdom. Oh, my dear E——, if we are Christians, there is a glorious prospect before us—as much of the good things of this life as an infinitely wise and kind Father sees to be best for us, and hereafter an eternity of unmingled and ineffable bliss!

LETTER CCXCIII.

MRS. SUSAN HUNTINGTON, after the loss of her husband, to a FRIEND at A——.

Boston, Nov. 23, 1820.

I have perceived an alteration in my mind since that bitter bereavement which closed up for ever, as to this world, one of the deepest channels through which the tide of my affections rolled upon the creature. An alteration which I should think very natural, namely, a more ardent attachment to other friends than I used to feel when I had a husband to love. This, I say, seems natural. An affectionate heart must love something. And, oh, most wretched is the being, who, accustomed to bestow on an object all the strength of a generous, ardent attachment, can find nothing, on the removal of that object, to excite and diffuse its exercise again! Though God should occupy the chasm left within by the removal of those who, perhaps, filled too large a space in our hearts, he does not require us to love him only. And, as we are social creatures, it is a mercy that we can feel the soothing glow of affection transferred, in some measure, from one to many, if we can love that one no longer. God has made us so; and I bless him for it. Who could live, having such a stream stopped, at once, and for ever? Yes, my dear E——, I love you more than I used to do: and am not jealous lest my affection for you should not all be reciprocated. And this experience is not observed in relation to you only, but also to others.

I did not see you enough when you were last in Boston. Our meetings often remind me of that world, where all the redeemed of the Lord shall be gathered into one common family, be "made kings and priests unto God, and go no more out for ever." Blessed day! Oh, could we remove the veil which conceals eternity from our view!—— but it is not necessary; for we have a more sure word of prophecy, which reveals all that is required to confirm our faith, and stimulate us to exertion.

My dear E——, how little we realize our high and holy vocation, our unspeakable privilege, in being called the daughters of the Lord Almighty, —if, indeed, we have been born of the Spirit,—our immense obligations, our glorious destination! If we realized these things, would it not be impossible for us to live as we do? Sinners saved by grace, through the application of the blood of the everlasting covenant; our suffering, bleeding, dying Surety and Redeemer, passed into the heavens to appear in the presence of God for us, having "left us an example, that we should follow his steps," and gone to prepare mansions in his Father's house for us; such an expiation, even the precious blood of Christ; such a salvation, from indignation and wrath—tribulation and anguish—moral ruin, hopeless and eternal, to glory, honour, immortality, and eternal life!—oh, realizing these things, could we live as we do? could we be so earnest to obtain the contemptible honours, immunities, and advantages of this poor, changeful world? could we so eagerly pursue its pleasures and deceits? could we be so discomfited by its perplexities and burdens? could it hold out to us, so often with success, its allurements, to tempt us from our Master and his service? Oh, no, no!

> What little things these worlds would be;
> How despicable in our eyes!

Well, dear E——, these things will all be realized by us soon. Whether prepared for it or not, we shall soon see, not through a glass darkly, but with the clear vision of immortality. O, how shall we see? Where shall we be found? In view of this awful subject, all is darkness and despair when we look to ourselves, when we look to any thing we are, any thing we have done, any thing we can do, it is all dark, dark, dark. But,—for ever and for ever, blessed be God!—we are not to look for justification to any thing in ourselves. There is an all-sufficient Saviour. He came to call, not the righteous, but sinners, to repentance. His blood cleanseth from all sin. And he has said, "Him that cometh to me, I will in no wise cast out." Here is hope, hope for sinners. Here let us cast our anchor-hope for eternity. Oh, to be found in him now; to be found in him at that awful day when the secrets of all hearts shall be made manifest; to be found in him for ever! As it respects ourselves, our great concern should be, to make our calling and election sure; and, as he who hath called us is holy, to be holy in all manner of conversation: and as it respects others, that they may be brought within the bond of the covenant, which is ordered in all things and sure, and is all our salvation, and all our desire.

LETTER CCXCIV.

Mrs. Susan Huntington to her Sister-in-law at N—— L——. Written after the death of two of her children, and many other heavy afflictions. The supports of Christianity.

Boston, Nov. 6, 1821.

You wish to be informed more particularly of the circumstances of my sweet Joshua's death. When I left him on Saturday, he appeared as well as usual. The heat of the weather had made him rather thin and pale; but he was not otherwise unwell. The doctor came to see him; and advised his removal to Mr. W——'s, where he could have all my friends near him. I think he must have fallen away greatly on Friday night, as the doctor did not speak of him as in a dangerous state, at the time of the visit just alluded to. On Saturday morning, the little sufferer was accordingly removed, for ever removed. After he arrived at Mr. W——'s, he was, by the direction of the physician, put into a warm bath. But no one seemed to be aware of his real situation. Early on Saturday morning I was sent for, and arrived at about half-past one o'clock in the afternoon. Light of heart, I sprang out of the carriage to inquire for my child; for I had been told that he was not very sick, and his being at Mr. W——'s confirmed me in the opinion. Mrs. W—— told me that he was now very sick. Still, however, my infatuation prevailed. I thought he could not be very sick, and be there. Judge then of my agony, when I entered the chamber, and saw my child, the darling of my soul, not as I left him, but engaged in his last conflict. I instantly recognized the hand of death, for I had seen it too often to be mistaken. Never shall I forget that look. Changed he was, but beautiful. There was a composed look, of meek and patient suffering; he looked as if he had quieted himself to die. His little eyes were already fixed. He did not know me. Oh, what a moment! About an hour and a half after this the last struggle commenced. I took him in my arms; and in a few minutes, he breathed his last sigh, as sweetly as ever a spirit disencumbered itself of its earthly habitation; and before I knew it, he was in heaven.

The greatest shock was the first. But my mind was unsettled all that and the next day. I hardly knew where or what I was; so little sensible had I been how this darling babe had entwined himself about every fibre of my heart. On Monday, however, I was relieved and comforted. But that was one of the most solemn weeks of my life. The strong and intense excitements of it were almost too much for my feeble frame: so that when Elizabeth was taken sick, which was on the next Sabbath, I sunk at once. She was soon released from all her sorrows. And I live to tell the tale. Who knows how much he is capable of enduring? I have since spent a few weeks at Andover, and am now quite well.

Sister Mary's health is exceedingly delicate. Her situation is, in my opinion, very critical. With unwearied care, she may live some years; or she may soon be taken from us.

Our family, my beloved sister, seems to be dissolving. God smote the head when he called your and my dear father; (for I loved him as a father;) and the shock seemed to extend itself to the branches, one after another of which has, since that time, withered and fallen. But how sweet to be permitted to believe, that of all the dear number removed, not one is lost! All safe, safe for ever. God grant that we may meet them there, where there is no more death.

LETTER CCXCV.

REV. JAMES HERVEY to a newly-acquired FRIEND.

REV. SIR, Weston Favell, Dec. 14, 1752.

Little did I think, when I recommended to the public your little work, that I should be so agreeably and amply recompensed for my occasional note—recompensed with a letter from the author; which, I assure you, was extremely welcome; not only on account of the same strain of elegance, which runs through and adorns your book; but for the tender which it brought me, of a very valuable accession to the small number of my friends. Your friendship, dear sir, I accept as a privilege, and shall cultivate with delight. Only I must in common justice, forewarn you of one particular: that your social intercourses with James Hervey, will be an exercise of charity, rather than an advantageous traffic to yourself. Besides other reasons, which I might too truly allege for the support of this hint, a long-continued habit of indisposition and bodily weakness, has laid a heavy hand on my animal spirits, which (take my word for it, since I hope you will never know it by experience) both cramps the exertion, and obstructs the improvement of the intellectual faculties. You remember, however, who has said, it is more blessed to give, than to receive; which I think will hold good, when applied either to the treasures of the mind, or the riches of fortune.

Your approbation of any thing in my slight remarks, will give me singular satisfaction; yet I should be no less obliged for your free thoughts on what should have been added, expunged, or altered. Let this, dear sir, be the first-fruits of our friendship. Point out my blemishes, and supply my defects, Applause may be more soothing to my vanity; but such kind corrections will be more pleasing to my judgment, and more serviceable to our common cause. It is scarce probable, that a second edition should be published, as the first was numerous; but if there should be such a demand, I am sure your animadversions would enrich, and ennoble it.

I thank you for your reflections on the Scriptures, which are perfectly just, and peculiarly animated. I cannot but wish that the vindication of their dignity, and the display of their excellency, had fallen to your share. This, I trust, is a service reserved for your pen; to be drawn, with ten-fold energy and success, on some future occasion. And may you, when called to such an important work, be a vessel unto honour, sanctified, and meet for the Master's use!

I bless God for the just notions you form concerning the Holy Spirit, and the necessity of his enlightening influences; without which, the Scriptures will be a sealed book, and even the word of life a dead letter. Men of superior abilities too often lean to their own understanding, and reject the guidance, the teachings, of the Holy Ghost. Not because these are not mentioned, insisted upon, promised in the gospel; but because they fancy themselves capable of comprehending, without any supernatural aid, *τα μεγαλεια τȣ Θεȣ*. But may we, sir, be sensible, ever sensible, that all our sufficiency is of God; and not blush to be the humble pupils of the heavenly Teacher, who hideth these things from the wise and prudent, but revealeth them unto babes. I am desirous of being taught by the labours of learned men; more desirous of being taught by the written word of revelation: but, amidst all, and above all, to be taught of God; or, as our Liturgy very boldly, but not improperly, explains the prophet, taught by the inspiration of God's holy Spirit.

I am pleased to hear from ——, that you are situated near that worthy gentleman Dr.——, whose works "praise him in the gate;" to whom belongs that noble character, the liberal person deviseth liberal things; to whom, I trust, will be made good that inestimable promise, in its fullest extent, "by liberal things shall he stand." They shall be his witnesses at the day of eternal judgment, that his faith in Christ Jesus has neither been empty, barren, nor dead. When you have the pleasure of waiting on him, be so good as to present him with my most respectful compliments.

You are not under the least obligation to me, for bearing my testimony to your late performance. It is a debt which I owe, for the delight I received in perusing it. I wish it may soon come to a second edition: and if my attestation to its merit is a means of introducing it into the hands of my readers, I do not doubt but it will do an honour to my taste. The present, which you promise me, will be very acceptable: but my dear sir, if you have a family, or your circumstances should not be affluent, I beg you would not think of it. You see I follow your example, and speak not as a new acquaintance, but as a bosom friend.

. . . . . .

"Not by might, not by strength, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord." And we may truly say, not by polished diction, or brilliant sentiment; not by the arts of persuasion, or the force of reasoning; but by God's almighty blessing, our attempts are prevalent, and our books successful. This is my comfort, and this my confidence: as an author, I would aim, singly aim at the glory of my divine Master, and the furtherance of his everlasting gospel. Then I would resign the issue of my endeavours wholly to his providence and grace; who can, "out of the mouths of babes and sucklings, perfect his praise." Nevertheless, I would by no means neglect the recommendations of a graceful composition. I would be glad to have the apples of gold, which are the truths of our holy religion, conveyed or set in pictures of silver. For this we have the genius of human nature, which, generally speaking, must be pleased, in order to be profited. For this we have the precedent of the wisest men, who sought and found out acceptable words, even when that which was written was the truth of God. If it is consistent with your other engagements, to oblige me in this very substantial manner, Mr.——, who undertakes to transmit this letter, has promised to convey a little parcel to your hands.

I wish you, sir, what the eloquent apostle styles, "the riches of the full assurance of understanding," (¹) and turning my wishes into prayers, take my leave, and profess myself,

Rev. Sir,
Your truly affectionate friend and brother,
J. HERVEY.

LETTER CCXCVI.

REV. ANDREW FULLER to an OLD FRIEND, whose son was at the point of death.

MY DEAR FRIEND, Kettering, July 18, 1799.

I find by a letter, that you are in constant expectation of losing your son. Since the time that you and I corresponded, our circumstances, temptations, afflictions, and almost every thing else pertaining to us, have undergone a change. We have each had a portion of parental care; and now, having passed the meridian of life, we begin to taste the cup of parental sorrow. We often talk of trials, without knowing much of what we say: that is a trial, methinks, which lays hold of us, and which we cannot shake off. If we say, "Surely I could bear any thing but this!" this shall often be

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(¹) See Colos. ii. 2.

the ill that we are called to bear; and this it is that constitutes it a trial. And why are afflictions called trials, but on account of their being sent to try what manner of spirit we are of? It is in these circumstances our graces appear, if we are truly gracious; and our corruptions, if we be under the dominion of sin; and too often, in some degree, if we be Christians. When I have experienced heavy trials, I have sometimes thought of the case of Aaron. He had two sons, fine young men, colleagues with their father; God accepted of their offering, and the people shouted for joy: every thing looked promising . . . . when, alas! in the midst of their glory, they sinned; and there went out a fire from the Lord, and devoured them. Well might the afflicted father say as he did: "And such things have befallen me!" yet he "held his peace." I say, I have sometimes thought of this case, when I have been heavily afflicted; and have employed my mind in this manner: such things befel Aaron, the servant of the Lord, a much better man than I am: who am I, that I should be exempted from the ills which are common to men, to good men, to the best of men? Such things befel Aaron as have not yet befallen me. He had two children cut off together; I have never yet lost more than one at once. His were cut off by an immediate judgment from heaven, and without any apparent space being given for repentance: thus have not mine been. Yet even Aaron held his peace; and shall I murmur? The just shall live by faith. God is telling us in general, that all things work together for good, to them that love him; but he has not informed us how: nor is it common under afflictions to perceive the good arising from them. It is afterwards that they yield the peaceable fruits of righteousness. If the Lord should remove your son, perhaps you are not without hopes of his salvation; and if the event should cause you to feel more than you have yet felt of the perishable nature of all things under the sun; and draw your heart more towards himself, and things above, where Jesus is; you may have occasion in the end to bless God for it. God knows we are strange creatures; and that we stand in need of strange measures, to restrain, humble, and sanctify us.

Give my love to your afflicted child, and give me leave to recommend to him, Him in whom alone he can be saved. I doubt not but you have recommended Christ to him, as the Saviour of the chief of sinners; yet you will not take it amiss, if I address the following few lines to him:—

"My dear young Friend,

"You know but little of me, nor I of you; but I love you for your parents' sake. While health and spirits were afforded you, you thought, I presume, but little of dying; and perhaps what you heard by way of counsel or warning, from the pulpit, or from other quarters, made but little impression upon you. A future world appeared to you a sort of dream, rather than a reality. The gratification of present desire seemed to be every thing. But now that Being against whom you have sinned has laid his hand upon you. Your present affliction seems to be of the nature of a summons: its language is, "Prepare to meet thy God, O sinner!" Perhaps you have thought but little of your state as a lost sinner before him; yet you have had sufficient proof in your own experience of the degeneracy and dreadful corruption of your nature. Have you learned from it this important lesson? If you have, while you bewail it before God, with shame and self-abhorrence, you will embrace the refuge set before you in the gospel. The name of Christ will be precious to your heart. God has given him to be the Saviour of the lost; and coming to him as worthy of death, you are welcome to the blessing of eternal life. No man is so little a sinner, but that he must perish for ever without him; and no man so great a sinner, as that he need despair of mercy in him. He has died, the just for the unjust, that he may bring us to God. His blood cleanseth from sin, and the benefits of it are free. The invitations of the gospel are universal. Though God would never hear the prayers or regard the tears of a sinner like you for your own sake; yet he will hear, from heaven his dwelling-place, that petition which is sincerely offered in the name of his Son. Repent of your sin, and you shall find mercy; believe his gospel with all your heart, and you shall live. Plead the worthiness of Christ as the ground of acceptance, to the utter rejection of your own, and God will graciously hear, forgive, and save you. Every one that thus asketh, receiveth; and he that seeketh, findeth; and to him that knocketh, the door of mercy shall be opened. In all your supplications for mercy, be sure you found your petitions on the worthiness of Christ alone. But if you can see no loveliness in him, nor beauty that you should desire him, depend upon it you are yet in your sins, and so dying, you must perish. I do not know whether you have at any time been inclined to listen to the abominable suggestions of infidels; but if you have, you now perceive that those are principles that will not stand by you in the near approach of death. If the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world be not now a comfort to you, you are comfortless. Look to him, my dear young friend, and live.

[Three deeply interesting letters of the Rev. William Mompesson, rector of Eyam, in Derbyshire; written during the plague, (1666,) amidst the terrible ravages of which this excellent man heroically persisted in performing his duty; introduced by a letter of Miss Anna Seward to a Friend, giving an account of Eyam and of Mr. Mompesson's character and sufferings.]

LETTER CCXCVII.

Miss Anna Seward to a Friend.

Lichfield, Feb. 13, 1765.

I wish in vain for a Claude, and Salvatorial pencil, to delineate the promised landscape of my native rocks and hills in Derbyshire. Take it, however, in the best tints of your friend's recollection.

Eyam, though but a village, is near a mile in length, and considerably populous. It sweeps, in a waving line, among the mountains, upon a kind of natural terrace, perhaps a quarter of a mile in breadth. From the stupendous Middleton, or Eyam-Dale, for the two places contend which of their names it shall bear, and which dale lies in the road between Buxton and Chatsworth, we ascend to Eyam up a steep and narrow lane, about three hundred yards, and enter near the middle of the village. On the right hand, to its eastern termination, the mountain, in whose bosom it stands, is crossed by another, and still higher mountain. This mountain rises opposite the back part of the parsonage, new-fronted by my father, who made it an excellent house to little purpose, having never been his home since it was finished.

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The village of Eyam was one of the last, if it were not the very last place in England visited by that dire contagion in 1666, the year after that in which, in the city of London, Death, on his pale horse, trampled on three thousand victims in one ghastly night. Mr. Mompesson was then rector of Eyam, and in the vigour of his youth. He had married a beautiful young lady, by whom he had a boy and girl, of three and four years old. The plague was brought thither in patterns of cloth sent from London to a tailor in our village. It raged with great violence, and swept away four-fifths of the inhabitants. This village is now much more thinly peopled, owing to the exhausted state of the lead-mines. Their wealth, during the last century, and early part of the present, occasioned the environs of Eyam, their thick-sown little towns and hamlets, to swarm with inhabitants.

On the commencement of the contagion, Mrs. Mompesson threw herself, with her babes, at the feet of her husband, to supplicate his flight from that devoted place, but not even the tears and entreaties of a beloved wife could induce him to desert his flock in these hours of danger and dismay. Equally fruitless were his persuasions that she would retire with her infants. The result of this pathetic contest was a resolve to remove their children, and abide together the fury of the pestilence.

My father is in possession of authentic copies of three letters from Mr. Mompesson, taken, as appears by the dates, at the time the originals were written. One of them is to his children, designed for their perusal in riper years; the other to his patron, Sir George Saville; and the third to his uncle, Mr. Beilby, of York. The two first were written during the rage of the distemper, the last after it had subsided. Mr. Mompesson, constantly visiting and praying by the sick,

"Drew, like Marseilles' good bishop, purer breath,
When nature sickened, and each gale was death."

From a rational belief, that assembling in the church for public worship during the summer heats, would spread and increase the infection, he agreed with his afflicted parishioners that he should read prayers to them three times in the week, and deliver his two sermons on the Sabbath from one of the perforated arches in the rocks of the verdant dingle, before described. By his directions, they ranged themselves on the grassy declivity, near the bottom, a yard distant from each other; the dell being so narrow, a speaker from that rock might be distinctly heard.

Do you not see this dauntless minister of God stretching forth his hands from the rock, and preaching to his alarmed and distressed flock in that little wilderness? How solemn, how pathetic, must have been his exhortations in those terrific hours!

The church-yard soon ceased to afford room for the dead, which were afterwards buried in a heathy hill above the village. Curious travellers take pleasure in visiting those tumuli, and in examining their yet distinct remains; also in descending from the cliffs, which brow the submit of the dingle, into the excavated rock from which Mr. Mompesson performed divine service during that awful visitation. The consecrated rock is called Cucklet Church, by the villagers, to this day.

We find, from united medical testimony, that the effects of the plague are very various; sometimes producing a parched, raging, and delirious fever;—sometimes profuse and caustic perspiration, in which life dissolves. In other instances, the tokens, as they are called, formed by a livid spot about the breadth of half-a-crown, and of impenetrable hardness, appear when the patient is in apparent health, and mark the grave's inevitable victim; since, when the tokens wear that appearance, the infected never survive longer than a very few hours, and often remain without perceptible disorder till the moment of expiration. If they are only discoloured, without being hard, if they suppurate, the patient generally recovers.

Mr. Mompesson remained in health during the whole time of the contagion; but Providence saw fit to put his fortitude to severer trial than if he had seen the plague-spot indurated upon his own body.

Amongst other precautions against the disease, Mrs. Mompesson had prevailed upon her husband to suffer an incision to be made in his leg, and kept open. One day she observed appearances in the wound which induced her belief that the contagion had found a vent that way, and that consequently the danger was over as to him; the digestion of the sore being a certain sign of recovery. Instead of being shocked that the pestilence had entered her house, and that her weakness, for she was not in health, must next endure its fury, she expressed the most rapturous gratitude to Heaven for the apprehended deliverance of him, whom more than her life she loved. His letters, though he seems to think her conviction groundless concerning his having taken the disease, make grateful mention of that disinterested joy.

Mrs. Mompesson, however, soon after sickened of the plague, and expired in her husband's arms, in the 27th year of her age. Her monument is now in Eyam church-yard, protected by iron rails, and with the inscription distinct. Her great granddaughter's pious visit to the tomb of her excellent ancestress, when I was at Eyam with my father in my sixteenth year, proved the commencement of a friendship between that very accomplished lady and myself, which I think will cease only with the life of one of us.

Upon the first appearance of the pestilence in Eyam, Mr. Mompesson wrote to the then Earl of Devonshire, residing at Chatsworth, to say, that he believed it possible to prevail upon his parishioners to confine themselves within the limits of the village, provided his grace would exert himself to induce the country round to supply them with necessaries, leaving such provisions as might be requested, in appointed places, and at appointed hours, upon the neighbouring hills.

The proposal was punctually complied with; and it is most remarkable, that when the pestilence became beyond conception terrible, not a single inhabitant attempted to pass the deathful bounds of the village, though a regiment of soldiers could not, in that rocky and open country, have detained them against their will; much less could any watch, which might have been set by the neighbourhood, have effected that infinitely important purpose.

By the influence of this exemplary man, the result of his pious and affectionate virtue, the rest of the county of Derby escaped the plague; not one of the very nearly neighbouring towns, hamlets, or even a single house, being infected beyond the limits of Eyam village, though the distemper remained there more than seven months.

Dr. Mead, in the last edition of his book on poisons, has recorded the prudence of Mr. Mompesson's conduct in the care he took to prevent, as much as possible, the contagion from spreading, and by his exertions to procure the most approved medicines from the faculty in London, for the use of his infected parishioners.

Some years afterwards, Mr. Mompesson obtained the prebend of York and Southwell, and the rectory of Eakring, in Nottinghamshire. He married his second wife in 1679, Mrs. Nuby, widow of Charles Nuby, Esq. by whom he had two daughters. She was a remarkably ingenious woman. The deanery of Lincoln was offered to him, but he declined it in favour of his friend, Dr. Fuller, to whom he had promised his interest, and by which interest the doctor obtained that deanery. Thus were piety, fortitude, honour, and generosity, blended in his character. He died in the year 1708. His memory ought never to die; it should be immortal as the spirit which made it worthy to live.

Your heart will expand over this faithful picture of elevated worth,

> "Of courage, that outshines, in its white hue,
> The sanguine colour of the soldier's daring."

In the summer 1757, five labouring men, inhabitants of Eyam, were digging amongst the plague-graves on the heathy mountain above the village, to make potatoe-ground for a cottage which had been built there. They came to something which had the appearance of having once been linen. Conscious of its situation, they instantly buried it again; but, in a few days, they all sickened of a putrid fever, and three out of the five died. It was so contagious, that the sick could procure no attendance out of their own family. The disease proved mortal to seventy persons of Eyam.

My father, who had two years before been appointed canon of Lichfield, was residing with his family in that city, at the period when the subtle, unextinguished, though much abated power of this superlatively dreadful disease awakened from the dust, in which it had slumbered ninety-one years.

All is silence from Shrewsbury. Mr. S—— is gone to Bath, which surely he would not have done, if his daughter's health had seemed in an alarming state. But O! why is she silent?—she said she would write to me. Adieu! adieu!

LETTER CCXCVIII.

REV. WILLIAM MOMPESSON to his CHILDREN.

DEAR HEARTS, Eyam, August 31, 1666.

This brings you the doleful news of your dearest mother's death; the greatest loss that could befal you. I am deprived of a kind and loving consort, and you are bereaved of the most indulgent mother that ever poor little children had. But we must comfort ourselves in God, with this consideration,—the loss is only ours; our sorrow is her gain, which should sustain our drooping spirits. I assure myself that her rewards and her joys are unutterable. Dear children, your blessed mother lived an holy life, and made a comfortable end, though by means of the sore pestilence, and she is now invested with a crown of righteousness.

My children, I think it may be useful to you to have a narrative of your dear mother's virtues, that the knowledge thereof may teach you to imitate her excellent qualities. In the first place, let me recommend to you her piety and devotion, which were according to the exact principles of the church of England. In the next place, I can assure you, she was composed of modesty and humility, which virtues did possess her dear soul in a most exemplary manner. Her discourse was ever grave and meek, yet pleasant also; a vaunting and immodest word was never heard to come out of her mouth. Again, I can set out in her two other virtues, with no little confidence, viz. charity and frugality. She never valued any thing she had, when the necessities of a poor neighbour did require it, but had a bountiful spirit towards all distressed and indigent persons;—yet she was never lavish or profuse, but carefully, constantly, and commendably frugal. She never liked the company of tattling women, and abhorred the wandering custom of going from house to house, that wastefully spending of precious time, for she was ever busied in useful occupations. Yet, though thus prudent, she was always kind and affable; for, while she avoided those whose company could not instruct or benefit her, and would not unbosom herself to any such, she dismissed and avoided them with civility.

I do believe, my dear hearts, upon sufficient grounds, that she was the kindest wife in the world, and think from my soul, that she loved me ten times better than she did herself; for she not only resisted my earnest entreaties, that she would fly with you, dear children, from this place of death, but, some few days before it pleased God to visit my house, she perceived a green matter to come from the issue in my leg, which she fancied a symptom that the distemper, raging amongst us, had gotten a vent that way, from whence she assured herself that I was passed the malignity of the disease, whereat she rejoiced exceedingly, amidst all the danger with which her near approach to me was attended, whom she believed to be infected.

Now I will tell you my thoughts of this business. I think she was mistaken in the nature of that discharge which she saw; certainly it was the salve that made it look so green; yet her rejoicing on that account was a strong testimony of her love to me; for it is clear she cared not for her own peril, so I were safe.

Further, I can assure you, my sweet babes, that her love to you was little inferior to that which she felt for me; since, why should she thus ardently desire my longer continuance in this world of sorrows, but that you might have the protection and comfort of my life ?

You little imagine with what delight she used to talk of you both, and the pains that she took when you sucked your milk from her breasts, is almost incredible. She gave a strong testimony of her love for you, when she lay upon her death-bed. A few hours before she expired, I brought her some cordials, which she told me plainly she was not able to take. I entreated she would take them, for your dear sakes. At the mention of your names, she, with difficulty, lifted herself up and took them, which was to let me understand, that, while she had any strength left, she would embrace an opportunity of testifying her affection to you.

Now I will give you an exact account of the manner of her death. It is certain she had, for some time, had symptoms of a consumption, and her flesh was considerably wasted thereby. However, being surrounded with infected families, she doubtless got the distemper from them. Her natural strength being impaired, she could not struggle with the disease, which made her illness so very short. Upon being seized, she showed much contrition for the errors of her life, and often cried out,—"One drop of my Saviour's blood to save my soul !"

At the beginning of her sickness, she earnestly desired me not to come near her, lest I should receive harm thereby; but I can assure you I did not desert her, but, thank God, stood to my resolution not to leave her in her sickness, who had been so tender a nurse to me in her health. Blessed be

God, that he enabled me to be so helpful and consoling to her, for which she was not a little thankful.

No worldly business was, during her illness, any disturbance to her; for she only minded making her call and election sure; and she asked pardon of her maid-servant for having sometimes given her an angry word.

I gave her several sweating antidotes, which had no kind operation, but rather scalded and inflamed her more, whereupon her dear head was distempered, which put her upon many incoherencies. I was much troubled thereat, and propounded to her several questions in divinity, as by whom, and upon what account, she expected salvation, and what assurances she had of the certainty thereof. Though in all other things she talked at random, yet to these religious questions she gave me as rational and welcome answers as I could desire; and, at those times, I bade her repeat after me certain prayers and ejaculations, which she always did with much devotion, which was no little comfort and admiration to me, that God should be so good and gracious to her.

A little before her dear soul departed she desired me to pray with her again. I went to her, and asked her how she did? Her answer was, that she was but looking when the good hour should come. Thereupon we went to prayers, and she made her responses from the Common Prayer-book as perfectly as if she had been in perfect health, and an amen to every pathetic expression. When we had ended our prayers for the visitation of the sick, we made use of those out of the Whole Duty of Man; and when I heard her say nothing, I urged,—" My dear, dost thou mind?" She answered, "Yes," and it was the last word she spoke.

I question not, my dear hearts, that the reading of this account will cause many a salt tear to spring from your eyes; yet let this comfort you,—your dear mother is a saint in heaven.

I could have told you of many more of her excellent virtues; but I hope you will not in the least question my testimony, if, in a few words, I tell you that she was pious and upright in all her conversation.

Now, to that most blessed God, who bestowed upon her all these graces, be ascribed all honour, glory, and dominion, the just tribute of all created beings, for evermore! Amen!

WILLIAM MOMPESSON.

LETTER CCXCIX.

REV. WILLIAM MOMPESSON to SIR GEORGE SAVILLE, written under the same circumstance.

HONOURED AND DEAR SIR, Eyam, Sept. 1, 1666.

This letter brings you the saddest tidings that ever my pen could write. The " destroying angel" has been in my habitation;—my dearest wife was stricken, and is gone to her everlasting rest, invested, as I trust, with a crown of glory, having made a most pious and happy end.

Indeed, had she loved herself as well as she loved me, she had fled, at my entreaty, with her sweet babes, from the pit of destruction; but she was resolved to die a martyr to my interest. My drooping spirits are much refreshed with her joys, which, I assure myself, are unutterable.

This paper, sir, is to bid you an hearty farewell for ever, and to bring you my thanks for all your noble favours; and I hope you will believe a dying man, that I have as much love as honour for you;—that I bend my feeble knees to the God of Heaven, that you, my dear lady, her children, and their children, may be blessed with happiness external, internal and eternal; and that the same blessings may fall upon my Lady Sunderland and her family.

Dear sir, let your dying chaplain recommend this truth to you and yours,—that no happiness or solid comfort can be secured in this vale of tears, but from living a pious life. I pray you, dear sir, to retain this rule—Never to do that thing upon which you dare not first ask the blessing of God upon the success thereof.

Sir, I have made bold with your name in my will for an executor; and I hope you will not take it ill. Others are joined with you, that will take from you all the trouble. Your favourable aspect will, I know, be a great comfort to my distressed orphans. I am not desirous that they should be great, but good; and it is my earnest request, that they may be brought up in the fear and admonition of the Lord. Sir, I thank God that I am willing to shake hands, in peace, with all the world; and I have comfortable assurances that he will accept me for the sake of his Son, and I find God more good than ever I imagined, and wish that his goodness were not so much abused and contemned.

I desire you would be pleased to make choice of an humble, pious man to succeed me in this parsonage. Could I see your face before I depart hence, I would inform you which way I think he may live comfortably among these people, which would be a satisfaction to me before I die.

Dear sir, I beg your prayers, and those of your family, that I may not be daunted or appalled by the powers of hell; that I may have dying graces, and be found in a dying posture; and, with tears, I entreat, that when you are praying for fatherless and motherless infants, you would then remember my two pretty babes.

Sir, pardon the rude style of this paper, and if my head be discomposed, you cannot wonder at me; however, be pleased to believe that I am,

Dear Sir,
Your most obliged, most affectionate,
and grateful servant,
William Mompesson.

LETTER CCC.

REV. WILLIAM MOMPESSON to his uncle, JOHN BEILBY, ESQ. of York, written under the same circumstances.

DEAR SIR, EYAM, Nov. 20, 1666.

I suppose this letter will seem no less than a miracle, proving that my habitation is *inter vivos.*—Being unwilling to affright you with a paper from my own hands, I have gotten a friend to transcribe these lines.

I know you are sensible of my lone condition, of my loss of the kindest wife in the world, whose life was truly inimitable, and her end most comfortable. She was in an excellent posture of preparation when death gave the summons, which fills me with assurances that she is now invested with a crown of righteousness.

By too sad experience, I find the maxim verified, "*Bonum magis carendo quam fruendo cernitur.*" Had I been as thankful as my condition did deserve of me, I might yet have had my dearest in my bosom. But now, farewell all happy days! and God grant that I may repent of my great ingratitude!

The condition of this place hath been so dreadful, that I persuade myself it exceeded all history and example. I may truly say, our town was become a Golgotha, the place of skulls; and, had there not been a small remnant of us left, we had been as Sodom, and like unto Gomorah. My ears never heard such doleful lamentations,—my nose never smelt such noisome smells,—and my eyes never beheld such ghastly spectacles. Here have been seventy-six families visited within my parish, out of which died two hundred and fifty-nine persons.

Blessed be God, our fears are now over, none having died of the infection since the 11th of October, nor is there any one under present suspicion; and all the pest-houses have been several weeks empty.

I intend, if it please God, to spend most of this week in seeing all woollen-clothes fumed and purified, as well for the satisfaction as for the safety of the country. Here hath been such burying of goods, as the like was surely never known; and, indeed, I think in this we have been too precise. For my own part, I have hardly left myself apparel to shelter my body from the cold, and have wasted more than need, for example's sake merely.

As to myself, I never was in better health than during the whole time of this dreadful visitation; neither can I think that I have had any certain symptom of the disease. My man-servant had the distemper. Upon the tumour appearing, I gave him several chemical antidotes, which had a very kind operation; and, with the blessing of God, they kept the venom from the heart, and after the tumour broke, he was very well. My maid hath continued in health, which was a great mercy; for, had she quailed, I should have been ill set to have washed and got provisions for myself.

I know I have had your prayers, and question not but I have fared the better for them; and conclude that the prayers of good people have rescued me from the jaws of death. Certainly I had been in the dust, if Omnipotency had not been conquered by holy violence.

I have largely tasted the goodness of my Creator; since, blessed be God, the grim looks of death did never yet affright me. I always had a firm faith that my dear babes would do well, which made me willing to leave this unkind and froward world. Yet I hope I shall esteem it a mercy that my desires of being, like my dear wife, translated to a better place, were frustrated. God grant that I may wait with patience for my change, and make a right use of his punishments, and of his mercies; for, if the first have been severe, so have the last been sweet and comfortable!

I perceive, by a letter from Mrs. Newby, that you have much and most kindly concerned yourself for my welfare. Indeed, I made no question of possessing your true affection. Be assured, that, in the midst of my great troubles, you were often in my thoughts.

Be pleased, sir, to accept the grateful presentment of my kindest respects, imparting the same to your good wife, and to all my dear relations.

A line from your hand would be welcome to, dearest sir,

Your sorrowful and truly affectionate nephew,

WILLIAM MOMPESSON.

END OF VOL II.

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